ESOP;

A

COMEDY:

As it is Acted at the

Theatre-Royal in *Drury-Lane.*

In Two Parts.

Written by

Sir JOHN VANBRUGH.

LONDON,

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PREFACE.

TO ſpeak for a Play, if it can't ſpeak for it ſelf, is vain; and if it can, 'tis needleſs. For one of theſe Reaſons (I can't yet tell which, for 'tis now but the ſecond Day of acting) I reſolve to ſay nothing for *Eſop*, tho I know he'd be glad of help; for let the beſt happen that can, his Journy's up Hill, with a dead *Engliſh* weight at the Tail of him.

At *Paris* indeed he ſcrambled up ſomething faſter (for 'twas up Hill there too) than I'm afraid he will do here; the *French* having more Mercury in their Heads, and leſs Beef and Pudding in their Bellies. Our Solidity may ſet hard, what their Folly makes eaſy: for Fools I own they are; you know we have found them ſo in the Conduct of the War, I wiſh we may do ſo in the Management of the Peace: but that's neither *Eſop*'s Buſineſs, nor mine.

This Play, Gentlemen (or one not much unlike it) was writ in *French* about ſix Years ſince by one Monſieur *Bourſaut*; 'twas play'd at *Paris* by the *French* Comedians, and this was its Fate:

The firſt Day it appear'd, 'twas routed (People ſeldom being fond of what they don't underſtand, their own ſweet Perſons excepted.) The ſecond (by the help of

some bold Knight-Errants) it rally'd; the third it advanc'd; the fourth it gave a vigorous Attack; and the fifth put all the Feathers in Town to the scamper, pursuing them on to the fourteenth, and then they cry'd out Quarter.

'Tis not reasonable to expect *Esop* should gain so great a Victory here, since 'tis possible by fooling with his Sword, I may have turn'd the Edge on't. For I confess in the Translation I have not at all stuck to the Original; nay, I have gone farther, I have wholly added the fifth Act, and crouded a Country-Gentleman into the fourth; for which I ask Monsieur *Boursaut*'s pardon with all my heart, but doubt I never shall obtain it for bringing him into such Company. Tho after all, had I been so complaisant to have waited on his Play word for word, 'tis possib'e even that might not have ensur'd the Success of it: For tho it swam in *France*, it might have sunk in *England*: Their Country abounds in Cork, ours in Lead.

PRO-

PROLOGUE.

Gallants, we never yet produc'd a Play
With greater Fears than this we act to-day;
Barren of all the Graces of the Stage,
Barren of all that entertains this Age.
No Hero, no Romance, no Plot, no Show,
No Rape, no Bawdy, no Intrigue, no Beau:
There's nothing in't with which we uſe to pleaſe ye;
With downright dull Inſtruction w'are to teaſe ye:
The Stage turns Pulpit, and the World's ſo fickle,
The Play-Houſe in a Whim turns Conventicle.
But Preaching here muſt prove a hungry Trade,
The Patentees will find ſo, I'm afraid:
For tho with Heavenly Zeal you all abound,
As by your Lives and Morals may be found;
Tho every Female here o'erflows with Grace,
And chaſte Diana's *written in her Face;*
Tho Maids renounce the Sweets of Fornication,
And one lewd Wife's not left in all the Nation;
Tho Men grow true, and the foul Fiend defy;
Tho Tradeſmen cheat no more, nor Lawyers lye;
Tho not one Spot be found on Levi's *Tribe,*
Nor one ſoft Courtier that will touch a Bride;
Yet in the midſt of ſuch religious Days,
Sermons have never borne the Price of Plays.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

Eſop,	Mr. *Cibber*.
Learchus, Governor of *Syracuſe*.	Mr. *Dogget*.
Oronces, in love with *Euphronia*.	Mr. *Harland*.

WOMEN.

Euphronia, Daughter to *Learchus*, in love with *Oronces*.	Mrs. *Temple*.
Davis, her Nurſe.	Mrs. *Verbruggen*.

People who come to *Eſop*, upon ſeveral Occaſions, independent one of another.

Two Country Tradeſmen.	Mr. *Pinkethman*, and Mr. *Smeton*.
Roger, a Country Bumkin.	Mr. *Haynes*.
Quaint, a Herald.	Mr. *Pinkethman*.
Fruitful, an Inn-keeper.	Mr. *Smeton*.
A Country Gentleman.	Mr. *Pinkethman*.
A Prieſt, Muſicians, *&c.*	
Hortenſia, an affected learned Lady.	Mrs. *Kent*.
Aminta, a leud Mother.	Mrs. *Willis*.
Forge-Will, a Scrivener's Widow.	Mrs. *Finch*.
Fruitful, Wife to the Inn-keeper,	Mrs. *Powell*.

ESOP.

ESOP.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Learchus's House.

Enter Learchus, Euphronia, *and* Doris.

Lear. AT length I am bleſt with the ſight of the World's Wonder, the Delight of Mankind, the incomparable *Eſop*. You had time to obſerve him laſt Night, Daughter, as he ſat at Supper with me. Tell me how you like him, Child; is he not a charming Perſon?

Euph. Charming!

Lear. What ſay'ſt thee to him, *Doris?* Thou art a good Judge, a Wench of a nice Palate.

Dor. You wou'd not have me flatter, Sir?

Lear. No, ſpeak thy Thoughts boldly.

Dor. Boldly, you ſay?

Lear. Boldly, I ſay.

Dor. Why then, Sir, my Opinion of the Gentleman is, that he's uglier than an old Beau.

Lear. How! Impudence.

Dor. Nay, if you are angry, Sir, ſecond Thoughts are beſt; he's as proper as a Pike-man, holds up his Head like a Dancing-Maſter, has the Shape of a Barn, the Face of an Angel, the Voice of a Cherubim, the Smell of a Civet-Cat——

Lear. In ſhort, thou art Fool enough not to be pleas'd with him.

Dor.

Dor. Excuse me for that, Sir, I have Wit enough to make my self merry with him.

Lear. If his Body's deform'd, his Soul is beautiful: Wou'd to kind Heaven, as he is, my Daughter cou'd but find the means to please him.

Euph. To what end, dear Father?

Lear. That he might be your Husband, dear Daughter.

Euph. My Husband! Shield me, kind Heaven———

Dor. Psha! he has a mind to make us laugh, that's all.

Lear. *Esop* then is not worth her Care, in thy Opinion.

Dor. Why truly, Sir, I'm always for making suitable Matches, and don't much approve of breeding Monsters. I would have nothing marry a Baboon, but what has been got by a Monkey.

Lear. How dar'st thou liken so incomparable a Man to so contemptible a Beast?

Dor. Ah, the Inconstancy of this World: Out of sight, out of mind. Your little Monkey is scarce cold in his Grave, and you have already forgot what you us'd so much to admire: Do but call him to remembrance, Sir, in his red Coat, new Gloves, little Hat, and clean Linen; then discharge your Conscience, utter the Truth from your Heart, and tell us whether he was not the prettier Gentleman of the two———By my Virginity, Sir (tho that's but a slippery Oath, you'll say) had they made love to me together, *Esop* should have worn the Willow.

Lear. Since nothing but an Animal will please thee, 'tis pity my Monkey had not that Virginity thou hast sworn by. But I, whom Wisdom charms, even in the homeliest Dress, can never think the much-deserving *Esop* unworthy of my Daughter.

Dor. Now, in the name of Wonder, what is't you so much admire in him?

Lear. Hark, and thou shalt know; but you, *Euphronia*, be you more especially attentive.

'Tis true he's plain; but that's, my Girl, a Trifle.
All manly Beauty's seated in the Soul;
And that of *Esop*, Envy's self must own,
Outshines whate'er the World has yet produc'd.
Crœsus, the prosperous Favourite of Heaven;
Crœsus, the happiest Potentate on Earth;

Whose

Whose Treasure (tho immense) is the least part
Of what he holds from Providence's Care,
Leans on his Shoulder as his grand Support,
Admires his Wisdom, doats upon his Truth,
And makes him Pilot to Imperial Sway.
But in this elevated Post of Power,
What's his Employ? Where does he point his Thoughts?
To live in Splendour, Luxury, and Ease,
Do endless Mischiefs, by neglecting Good,
And build his Family on others Ruins?
No:
He serves the Prince, and serves the People too;
Is useful to the Rich, and helps the Poor;
There's nothing stands neglected, but himself,
With constant Pain, and yet with constant Joy,
From place to place throughout the Realm he goes,
With useful Lessons, form'd to every Rank:
The People learn Obedience from his Tongue,
The Magistrate is guided in Command,
The Prince is minded of a Father's Care;
The Subject's taught the Duty of a Child.
And as 'tis dangerous to be bold with Truth,
He often calls for Fable to his Aid,
Where under abject Names of Beasts and Birds,
Vertue shines out, and Vice is cloth'd in Shame.
And thus by inoffensive Wisdom's Force,
He conquers Folly wheresoe'er he moves:
This is his Portraite.

Dor. A very good Picture of a very ill Face!

Lear. Well, Daughter; what, not a word? Is it possible any thing that I am Father of can be untouch'd with so much Merit?

Euph. My Duty may make all things possible: But *Esop* is so ugly, Sir——

Lear. His Soul has so much Beauty in't, your Reason ought to blind your Eyes: Besides, my Interest is concern'd; his Power alarms me. I know throughout the Kingdom he's the Scourge of evil Magistrates, turns out Governors when they turn Tyrants, breaks Officers for false Musters; excludes Judges from giving Sentence, when they have been absent during the Tryal; hangs Lawyers

Lawyers when they take Fees on both sides; forbids Physicians to take Money of those they don't cure. 'Tis true, my Innocence ought to banish my Fears: But my Government, Child, is too delicious a Morsel, not to set many a frail mouth a watering: Who knows what Accusations Envy may produce? But all wou'd be secure, if thou could'st touch the Heart of *Esop*. Let me blow up thy Ambition, Girl; the fire of that will make thy Eyes sparkle at him. (*She sighs.*

——What's that Sigh for now? Ha!

A young Husband, by my Conscience: Ah, Daughter, had'st thou a young Husband, he'd make thee sigh indeed. I'll tell thee what he's compos'd of. He has a Wig full of Pulvillio, a Pocket full of Dice, a Heart full of Treason, a Mouth full of Lyes, a Belly full of Drink, a Carcass full of Plasters, a Tail full of Pox, and a Head full of——nothing. There's his Picture; wear it at thy Heart if thou can'st. But here comes one of greater Worth.

Enter Esop.

Lear. Good morning to my noble Lord; your Excellency——

Esop. Softly, good Governor: I'm a poor Wanderer from place to place; too weak to train the weight of Grandeur with me: The name of Excellency's not for me.

Lear. My noble Lord, 'tis due to your Employ; your Predecessors all——

Esop. My Predecessors all deserv'd it, Sir, they were great Men in Wisdom, Birth, and Service; whilst I, a poor, unknown, decrepit Wretch, mounted aloft for Fortune's Pastime, expect each moment to conclude the Farce, by sinking to the Mud from whence I sprung.

Lear. Great *Crœsus*'s Gratitude will still support you; his Coffers all are open to your Will; your future Fortune's wholly in your power.

Esop. But 'tis a Power that I shall ne'er employ.

Lear. Why so, my Lord?

Esop. I'll tell you, Sir.

A hungry Goat, who had not eat
Some Nights and Days——(for want of Meat)
Was

Was kindly brought at last,
By Providence's Care,
To better Cheer,
After a more than penitential Fast.
He found a Barn well stor'd with Grain,
To enter in requir'd some Pain;
But a delicious Bait
Makes the way easy, tho the Pass is strait.
Our Guest observing various Meats,
He put on a good modish Face,
He takes his Place,
He ne'er says Grace,
But where he likes, he there falls to and eats.
At length with jaded Teeth and Jaws,
He made a Pause,
And finding still some room,
Fell to as he had done before,
For time to come laid in his Store;
And when his Guts cou'd hold no more,
He thought of going home.
But here he met the Glutton's Curse;
He found his Belly grown so great,
'Twas vain to think of a Retreat,
Till he had rendet'd all he'ad eat,
And well he far'd no worse.

To the Application, Governor.

Lear. 'Tis easy to be made, my Lord.

Esop. I'm glad on't. Truth can never be too clear. [*Seeing* Euph.] Is this young Damsel your fair Daughter, Sir?

Lear. 'Tis my Daughter, my good Lord: Fair too, if she appears such in the Eyes of the unerring *Esop.*

Esop *going up to salute her.*] I never saw so beautiful a Creature.

Lear. aside.] Now's the time; kiss, soft Girl, and fire him.

Esop *gazing at her.*] How partial's Nature 'twixt her To rn and mine!

Lear. aside.] Look, look, look, how he gazes at her! —— *Cupid*'s hard at work, I see that already. Slap; there he hits him——if the Wench would but do her part. But see, see, how the perverse young Baggage stands biting

her

her Thumbs, and won't give him one kind Glance——— Ah the ſullen Jade! Had it been a handſome ſtrong Dog of five and twenty, ſhe'd a fall'n a coquetting on't, with every Inch about her. But may be it's I that ſpoil Sport, I'll make a pretence to leave them together. Will your Lordſhip pleaſe to drink any Coffee this Morning?

Eſop. With all my heart, Governor.

Lear. Your Lordſhip will give me leave to go and order it my ſelf; for unleſs I am by, 'tis never perfect.

Eſop. Provided you leave me this fair Maid in Hoſtage for your Return, I conſent.

Lear. My good Lord does my Daughter too much Honour!
Ah that the Wench wou'd but do her part (*Aſide, going off.*
———Hark you, Huſſy———
[*Turning back to* Euphronia *aſide.*
———You can give your ſelf Airs ſometimes, you know you can. Do you remember what work you made with your ſelf at Church t'other day? Play your Tricks over again once more for my pleaſure, and let me have a good account of this Statesman, or, d'ye hear?——— You ſhall die a Maid; go chew upon that; go. (*Exit Lear.*

Eſop. Here I am left, fair Damſel, too much expos'd to your Charms, not to fall your Victim.

Euph. Your Fall will then be due to your own Weakneſs, Sir; for Heaven's my Witneſs, I neither endeavour nor wiſh to wound you.

Eſop. I underſtand you, Lady; your Heart's already diſpos'd of, 'tis ſeldom otherwiſe at your Age.

Euph. My Heart diſpos'd of!

Dor. Nay, never mince the matter, Madam. The Gentleman looks like a civil Gentleman, e'en confeſs the Truth to him: He has a good Intereſt with your Father, and no doubt will employ it to break the Heathenish Match he propoſes to you.

To Eſop. Yes, Sir, my young Lady has been in love theſe two years, and that with as pretty a Fellow as ever entred a Virgin's Heart; tall, ſtrait, young, vigorous, good Clothes, long Perriwig, clean Linen; in brief, he has every thing that's neceſſary to ſet a young Lady a longing, and to ſtay it when he has done: But her Fa-

ther,

ther, whose Ambition makes him turn Fool in his old Age, comes with a back Stroke upon us, and spoils all our Sport. Wou'd you believe it, Sir! He has propos'd to her to-day the most confounded ugly Fellow: Look, if the very Thoughts of him don't set the poor thing a crying: And you, Sir, have so much power with the old Gentleman, that one word from you would set us all right again. If he will have her a Wife, in the name of *Venus* let him provide her a handsome Husband, and not throw her into the Paws of a thing that Nature in a merry Humour has made half Man, half Monkey.

Esop. Pray what's this Monster's Name, Lady?

Euph. No matter for his Name, Sir, my Father will know who you mean at first word.

Esop. But you shou'd not always chuse by the Outside alone; believe me, fair Damsel, a fine Perriwig keeps many a Fool's Head from the Weather: have a care of your young Gallant.

Dor. There's no Danger, I have examin'd him; his Inside's as good as his out; I say he has Wit, and I think I know.

Euph. Nay, she says true; he's even a Miracle of Wit and Beauty: Did you but see him, you'd be your self my Rival.

Esop. Then you are resolv'd against the Monster.

Dor. Fy, Sir, fy, I wonder you'll put her in mind of that foul frightful thing: We shall have her dream of nothing all night but Bats and Owls, and Toads and Hedghogs, and then we shall have such a squeaking and squalling with her, the whole House will be in an Uproar: Therefore, pray Sir, name him no more, but use your Interest with her Father that she may never hear of him again.

Esop. But if I should be so generous to save you from the old Gallant, what shall I say for your young one?

Euph. O, Sir, you may venture to enlarge upon his Perfections; you need not fear saying too much in his Praise.

Dor. And pray, Sir, be as copious upon the Defects of t'other; you need not fear out-running the Text there neither, say the worst you can.

Euph. You may say the first is the most graceful Man that *Asia* ever brought forth.

Dor. And you may say the latter is the most deform'd Monster that Copulation ever produc'd.

Euph. Tell him that *Oronces* (for that is his dear Name) as all the Virtues that compose a perfect Hero.

Dor. And tell him that *Pigmy* has all the Vices that go to equip an Attorney.

Euph. That to one I could be true to the last moment of my Life.

Dor. That for t'other she'd cuckold him the very day of her Marriage.

This, Sir, in few words, is the Theme you are desir'd to preach upon.

Esop. I never yet had one that furnish'd me with more matter.

Enter Servant.

Ser. My Lord, there's a Lady below desires to speak with your Honour.

Esop. What Lady?

Ser. It's my Lady —— my Lady ——[*To* Doris.] The Lady there, the wise Lady, the great Scholar, that no body can understand.

Dor. O ho, is it she? Pray let's withdraw, and oblige her, Madam; she's ready to swoon at the insipid sight of one of her own Sex.

Euph. You'll excuse us, Sir, we leave you to wiser Company. [*Exeunt* Euph. *and* Dor.

Enter Hortensia.

Hort. The Deess, who from *Atropos*'s Breast preserves the Names of Heroes and their Actions, proclaims your Fame throughout this mighty Orb, and———

Esop aside.] Shield me, my Stars! what have you sent me here? For pity's sake, good Lady, be more humane: My Capacity is too heavy to mount to your Stile: If you wou'd have me know what you mean, please to come down to my Understanding.

Hort. I've something in my Nature soars too high
For vulgar Flight, I own;
But *Esop*'s Sphere must needs be within Call;
Esop and I may sure converse together:
I know he's modest, but I likewise know
His Intellects are categorical.

Esop.

Esop. Now, by my Faith, Lady, I don't know what *Intellect* is; and methinks *categorical* sounds as if you call'd me Names. Pray speak that you may be understood; Language was design'd for it, indeed it was.

Hort. Of vulgar Things, in vulgar Phrase we talk;
But when of *Esop* we must speak,
The Theme's too lofty for an humble Stile:
Esop is sure no common Character.

Esop. No, truly, I am something particular. Yet, if I am not mistaken, what I have extraordinary about me, may be describ'd in very homely Language. Here was a young Gentlewoman but just now pencil'd me out to a hair, I thought, and yet I vow to God the learned'st word I heard her make use of, was Monster.

Hort. That was a Woman, Sir, a very Woman; her Cogitations all were on the outward Man:
But I strike deeper, 'tis the Mind I view.
The Soul's the worthy Object of my Care;
The Soul, that Sample of Divinity, that glorious
Ray of Heavenly Light. The Soul, that aweful
Throne of Thought, that sacred Seat of Contemplation.
The Soul, that noble Source of Wisdom,
That Fountain of Comfort,
That Spring of Joy, that happy Token of eternal
Life; the Soul, that ——

Esop. Pray, Lady, are you married?

Hort. Why that Question, Sir?

Esop. Only that I might wait upon your Husband to wish him Joy.

Hort. When People of my Composition would marry, they first find something of their own Species to join with; I never could resolve to take a thing of common Fabrick to my Bed, lest when his brutish Inclination prompt him, he shou'd make me Mother to a Form like his own.

Esop. Methinks a Lady so extremely nice, should be much at a loss who to converse with.

Hort. I keep my Chamber, and converse with my self; 'tis better being alone, than to mis-ally one's Conversation:
Men are scandalous, and Women are insipid:
Discourse without Figure makes me sick at my Soul:
O the Charms of a Metaphor!

What Harmony there is in the words of Erudition; The Muſick of them is inimaginable.

Eſop. Will you hear a Fable, Lady?

Hort. Willingly, Sir; the Apologue pleaſes me when the Application of it is juſt.

Eſop. It is, I'll anſwer for it.

Once on a time, a Nightingale
To Changes prone,
Unconſtant, fickle, whimſical,
(A Female one)
Who ſung like others of her kind,
Hearing a well-taught Linnet's Airs,
Had other matters in her mind;
To imitate him ſhe prepares,
Her Fancy ſtrait was on the Wing:
I fly, quoth ſhe,
As well as he;
I don't know why
I ſhould not try
As well as he to ſing.
From that day forth ſhe chang'd her Note,
She ſpoil'd her Voice, ſhe ſtrain'd her Throat;
She did, as learned Women do,
Till every thing
That heard her ſing,
Won'd run away from her —— as I from you.
(*Exit* Eſop *running.*

Hortenſia *ſola.*

How groſly does this poor World ſuffer it ſelf to be impos'd upon? ——*Eſop*, a Man of Senſe——Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! Alas, poor Wretch: I ſhou'd not have known him but by his Deformity; his Soul's as nauſeous to my Underſtanding, as his odious Body to my Senſe of Feeling. Well,

'Mongſt all the Wits that are allow'd to ſhine,
Methinks there's nothing yet approaches mine:
Sure I was ſent the homely Age t'adorn;
What Star, I know not, rul'd when I was born,
But every thing, beſides my ſelf, 's my Scorn.
(*Exit.*

ACT

ACT II.

Enter Euphronia *and* Doris.

Dor. WHat in the name of *Jove*'s the matter with you?
Speak, for Heaven's ſake.

Euph. Oh! what ſhall I do? *Doris*, I'm undone.

Dor. What raviſh'd?

Euph. No, ten times worſe! Ten times worſe! Unlace me, or I ſhall ſwoon.

Dor. Unlace you? Why you are not thereabouts, I hope?

Euph. No, no; worſe ſtill; worſe than all that.

Dor. Nay, then it's bad indeed. [Dor. *unlaces her.* There: How d'ye do now?

Euph. So; it's going over.

Dor. Courage, pluck up your Spirits: Well; now what's the matter?

Euph. The matter! Thou ſhalt hear. Know that —— that Cheat —— *Eſop* ——

Dor. Like enough; ſpeak: What has he done? That ugly ill-boding Cyclops.

Euph. Why inſtead of keeping his Promiſe, and ſpeaking for *Oronces*; he has not ſaid one word, but what has been for himſelf. And by my Father's Order, before to-morrow Noon he's to marry me.

Dor. He marry you! ——

Euph. Am I in the wrong to be in this deſpair? Tell me, *Doris*, if I am to blame?

Dor. To blame! No, by my troth. That ugly, old, treacherous piece of Vermin: That melancholy Mixture of Impotence and Deſire: does his Mouth ſtand to a young Partridge: Ah the old Goat. And your Father! He downright doats at laſt then.

Euph. Ah, *Doris*; what a Husband does he give me? And what a Lover does he rob me of? Thou know'ſt 'em both; think of *Oronces*, and think of *Eſop*.

Dor. Spitting.] A foul Monſter. And yet now I think on't, I'm almoſt as angry at t'other too: Methinks he makes but a ſlow Voyage on't for a Man in Love: 'tis

now above two Months since he went to *Lesbos*, to pack up the old Bones of his dead Father; sure he might have made a little more haste.

Enter Oronces.

Euph. Oh! my Heart; what do I see?

Dor. Talk of the Devil, and he's at your Elbow.

Or. My dear Soul.

[Euph. *runs and leaps about his Neck.*

Euph. Why wou'd you stay so long from me?

Or. 'Twas not my Fault indeed; the Winds——

Dor. The Winds! Will the Winds blow you your Mistress again? We have had Winds too, and Waves into the bargain, Storms and Tempests, Sea-Monsters, and the Devil and all. She struggled as long as she cou'd, but a Woman can do no more than she can do; when her Breath was gone, down she sunk.

Or. What's the meaning of all this?

Dor. There's meaning and mumping too:
Your Mistress is married; that's all.

Or. Death and Furies——

Euph. clinging about him.] Don't you frighten him too much neither, *Doris*.
No, my Dear, I'm not yet executed, tho I'm condemn'd.

Or. Condemn'd? To what? Speak! Quick!

Dor. To be married.

Or. Married? When? How? Where? To what? To whom?

Dor. *Esop, Esop, Esop, Esop, Esop.*

Or. Fiends and Spectres! What! That piece of Deformity! That Monster! That Crump!

Dor. The same, Sir, the same. I find he knows him. You might have come home sooner.

Or. Dear *Euphronia*, ease me from my pain. Swear that you neither have, nor will consent.
I know this comes from your ambitious Father;
But you're too generous, too true to leave me:
Millions of Kingdoms ne'er wou'd shake my Faith,
And I believe your Constancy as firm

Euph. You do me Justice, you shall find you do: For Racks and Tortures, Crowns, and Scepters join'd, shall neither fright me from my Truth, nor tempt me to be false. On this you may depend.

Dor.

Dor. Wou'd to the Lord you wou'd find some other place to make your fine Speeches in. Don't you know that your dear Friend *Esop*'s coming to receive his Visits here? In this great downy Chair, your pretty little Husband Elect is to sit and hear all the Complaints of the Town: One of Wisdom's chief Recompences, being to be constantly troubled with the business of Fools.

Pray, Madam, will you take the Gentleman by the Hand, and lead him into your Chamber; and when you are there, don't lie whining, and crying, and sighing, and wishing——

Aside.] If he had not been more modest than wise, he might have set such a Mark upon the Goods before now, that ne'er a Merchant of 'em all wou'd have bought 'em out of his hands. But young Fellows are always in the wrong: Either so impudent they are nauseous, or so modest they are useless.

Go, pray get you gone together.

Euph. But if my Father catch us, we are ruin'd.

Dor. By my Conscience this Love will make us all turn Fools. Before your Father can open the Door, can't he slip down the Back-stairs? I'm sure he may, if you don't hold him; but that's the old Trade. Ah——Well, get you gone however——Hark——I hear the old Baboon cough; away! [*Ex.* Or. *and* Euph. *running.* Here he comes with his ugly Beak before him. Ah—— a lascious Bedfellow, by my troth!

Enter Learchus *and* Esop.

Lear. Well, *Doris*; what news from my Daughter? Is she prudent?

Dor. Yes, very prudent.

Lear. What says she? What does she do?

Dor. Do? What should she do? Tears her Cornet; bites her Thumbs; throws her Fan in the Fire; thinks it's dark Night at Noon-day; dreams of Monsters and Hobgoblins; raves in her Sleep of forc'd Marriage and Cuckoldom: Cries, *Avaunt* Deformity; then wakens a sudden, with fifty Arguments at her Fingers ends, to prove the Lawfulness of Rebellion in a Child, when a Parent turns Tyrant.

Lear. Very fine! but all this shan't serve her turn.

I have ſaid the word, and will be obey'd——
My Lord does her honour.

Dor. Aſide.] Yes, and that's all he can do to her.

To Lear.] But I can't blame the Gentleman after all; he loves my Miſtreſs, becauſe ſhe's handſome; and ſhe hates him, becauſe he's ugly.

I never ſaw two People more in the right in my Life.

To Eſop.] You'll pardon me, Sir, I'm ſomewhat free.

Eſop. Why, a Ceremony would but take up time. But, Governour, methinks I have an admirable Advocate about your Daughter.

Lear. Out of the Room, Impudence: be gone, I ſay.

Dor. So I will: But you'll be as much in the wrong when I'm gone, as when I'm here. And your Conſcience, I hope, will talk as pertly to you as I can do.

Eſop. If ſhe treats me thus before my Face, I may conclude I'm finely handled behind my Back.

Dor. I ſay the Truth here; and I can ſay no worſe any where. [*Exit* Doris.

Lear. I hope your Lordſhip won't be concerned at what this prating Wench bleats out; my Daughter will be govern'd, ſhe's bred up to Obedience. There may be ſome ſmall difficulty in weaning her from her young Lover: but 'twon't be the firſt time ſhe has been wean'd from a Breaſt, my Lord.

Eſop. Does ſhe love him fondly, Sir?

Lear. Fooliſhly, ~~my Lord~~.

Eſop. And he her?

Lear. The ſame.

Eſop. Is he young?

Lear. Yes, and vigorous.

Eſop. Rich?

Lear. So, ſo.

Eſop. Well-born?

Lear. He has good Blood in his Veins.

Eſop. Has he Wit?

Lear. He had before he was in love.

Eſop. And handſome with all this?

Lear. Or elſe we ſhould not have half ſo much trouble with him.

Eſop. Why do you then make her quit him for me?

All the World knows I am neither young, noble, nor rich: and as for my Beauty——Look you, Governour, I'm honeſt. But when Children cry, they tell 'em *Eſop*'s a coming. Pray, Sir, what is it makes you ſo earneſt to force your Daughter?

Lear. Am I then to count for nothing the favour you are in at Court? Father-in-law to the Great *Eſop*! What may not I aſpire to? My fooliſh Daughter perhaps mayn't be ſo well pleas'd with't, but we wiſe Parents uſually weigh our Childrens Happineſs in the Scale of our own Inclinations.

Eſop. Well, Governour, let it be your Care then to make her conſent.

Lear. This moment, my Lord, I reduce her either to Obedience, or to Duſt and Aſhes. [*Exit Lear.*

Eſop. Adieu. Now let in the People
Who come for Audience.

[*Eſop ſits in his Chair, reading of Papers. Enter two ordinary Tradeſmen.*

1 *Tra.* There he is, Neighbour: Do but look at him.

2 *Tra.* Ay; One may know him: He's well mark't. But dos't hear me? What Title muſt we give him? for if we fail in that point, d'ye ſee me, we ſhall never get our buſineſs done. Courtiers love Titles almoſt as well as they do Money, and that's a bold word now.

1 *Tra.* Why I think we had beſt call him his Grandeur.

2 *Tra.* That will do; thou haſt hit on't. Hold ſtill, let me ſpeak. May it pleaſe your Grandeur——

Eſop. There I interrupt you, Friend; I have a weak Body that will ne'er be able to bear that Title.

2 *Tra.* D'ye hear that, Neighbour? What ſhall we call him now?

1 *Tra.* Why, call him, call him his Excellency: Try what that will do.

2 *Tra.* May it pleaſe your Excellency——

Eſop. Excellency's a long word, it takes up too much time in Buſineſs: Tell me what you'd have in few words.

2 *Tra.* Neighbour, this Man will never give
Ten thouſand Pounds to be made a Lord.
But what ſhall I ſay to him now?
He puts me quite out of my play.

1 *Tra.*

1 *Tra.* Why e'en talk to him as we do to one another.

2 *Tra.* Shall I? Why ſo I will then. Hem! Neighbour:
We want a new Governour, Neighbour.

Eſop. A new Governour, Friend?

2 *Tra.* Ay, Friend.

Eſop. Why what's the matter with your old one?

2 *Tra.* What's the matter!
Why he grows rich; that's the matter:
And he that's rich, can't be innocent; that's all.

Eſop. Does he uſe any of you harſhly?
Or puniſh you without a fault?

2 *Tra.* No, but he grows as rich as a Miſer;
His Purſe is ſo cramb'd, its ready to burſt again.

Eſop. When 'tis full 'twill hold no more;
A new Governour will have an empty one.

2 *Tra.* 'Fore Gad, Neighbour, the little Gentleman's in the right on't.

1 *Tra.* Why truly I don't know but he may:
For now it comes in my Head,
It coſt me more Money to fat my Hog,
Than to keep him fat when he was ſo.
Prithee tell him we'll keep our old Governour.

2 *Tra.* I'll do't. Why, look you, Sir, d'ye ſee me;
Having ſeriouſly conſider'd of the matter,
My Neighbour *Hobſon*, and I here, we are content to jog on a little longer with him we have: But if you'd do us another Courteſy, you might.

Eſop. What's that, Friend?

2 *Tra.* Why that's this: Our King *Cræſus* is a very good Prince, as a Man may ſay: But——a——but——Taxes are high, an't pleaſe you; and——a——poor Men want Money, d'ye ſee me: It's very hard, as we think, that the Poor ſhou'd work to maintain the Rich. If there were no Taxes, we ſhould do pretty well.

1 *Tra.* Taxes indeed are very burdenſome.

Eſop. I'll tell you a Story, Countrymen.
Once on a time, the Hands and Feet,
As Mutineers, grew mighty great;
They met, caball'd, and talk'd of Treaſon,
They ſwore by Jove *they knew no reaſon*

The

The Belly shou'd have all the Meat,
It was a damn'd notorious Cheat,
They did the Work, and—Death and Hell, they'd eat.
The Belly who ador'd good Chear,
Had like t'have dy'd away for fear:
Quoth he, good Folks, you little know
What 'tis you are about to do;
If I am starv'd, what will become of you?
We neither know nor care, cry'd they,
But this we will be bold to say,
We'll see you damn'd
Before we'll work,
And you receive the Pay.
With that the Hands to Pocket went
Full Wrist-band deep,
The Legs and Feet fell fast asleep:
Their Liberty they had redeem'd,
And all, except the Belly, seem'd
Extremely well content.
But mark what follow'd; 'twas not long
Before the right became the wrong;
The Mutineers were grown so weak,
They found 'twas more than time to speak:
They call for Work, but 'twas too late.
The Stomach (like an aged Maid,
Shrunk up, for want of human Aid)
The common Debt of Nature paid,
And with its Destiny entrain'd their Fate.

Esop. What think you of this Story, Friends, ha? Come, you look like wise Men; I'm sure you understand what's for your good; in giving part of what you have, you secure all the rest: if the King had no Money, there cou'd be no Army; and if there were no Army, your Enemies wou'd be amongst you: One day's Pillage wou'd be worse than twenty Years Taxes: What say you? Is't not so?

2 *Tra.* By my troth, I think he's in the right on't again.

Who'd think that little Hump-back of his
Shou'd have so much Brains in't, Neighbour?

Esop.

Esop. Well, honest Men, is there any thing else that I can serve you in?

1 *Tra.* D'ye hear that, *Humphrey?* ——— Why that was civil now.
But Courtiers seldom want Good-Breeding;
Let's give the Devil his due.
Why, to tell you the truth, honest Gentleman, we had a whole Budget full of Grievances to complain of. But I think——a——Ha, Neighbour?
We had e'en as good let 'em alone.

1 *Tra.* Why good feath I think so too, for by all I can see, we are like to make no great hond on't. Besides, between thee and me, I begin to daubt, whether aur Grievances do us such a plaguy deal of Mischief as we fancy.

2. *Tra.* Or put Case they did, *Humphrey*; I'se afraid, he that goes to a Courtier, in hope to get fairly rid of 'em, may be said (in aur Country Dialect) to take the wrong Sow by the Ear. But here's Neighbour *Roger*, he's a Wit, let's leave him to him. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Roger, *a Country Bumkin; looks seriously upon* Esop; *then bursts out a laughing.*

Rog. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha: Did ever Mon behold the like?———
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

Esop. Hast thou any business with me, Friend?

Rog. Yes by my troth have I;
But if *Roger* were to be hang'd up for't,
Look you now, he cou'd not hold laughing:
What I have in my Mind, out it comes: But bar that; I'se on honest Lad as well as another.

Esop. My Time's dearer to me than yours, Friend; Have you any thing to say to me?

Rog. Gad-wookers, do People use to ask for Folks when they have nothing to say to 'em?
I'se tell you my business.

Esop. Let's hear it.

Rog. I have, as you see, a little Wit.

Esop. True.

Rog. I live in a Village hard by, and I'se the best Mon in it, tho I say it that shou'd not say it. I have good

good Drink in my Cellar, and good Corn in my Barn; I have Cows and Oxen, Hogs and Sheep, Cocks and Hens, and Geese and Turkeys: but the truth will out, and so let it out. I'se e'en tir'd of being call'd plain *Roger*. I has a Leathern Purse, and in that Purse there's many a fair Half-Crown, with the King's sweet Face upon it, God bless him; and with this Money I have a mind to bind my self Prentice to a Courtier: It's a good Trade, as I have heard say; there's Money stirring: Let a Lad be but diligent, and do what he's bid, he shall be let into the Secret, and share part of the Profits: I have not liv'd to these Years for nothing: Those that will swim must go into deep Water: I'se get our Wife *Joan* to be the Queen's Chamber-maid; and then——Crack says me I; and forget all my Acquaintance.

But to come to the business. You who are the King's great Favourite, I desire you'll be pleas'd to sell me some of your Friendship, that I may get a Court-Place. Come, you shall chuse me one yourself; you look like a shrewd Man; by the Mass you do.

Esop. I chuse thee a Place!

Rog. Yes: I would willingly have it such a sort of a Place, as wou'd cost little, and bring in a great deal: in a word, much Profit, and nothing to do.

Esop. But you must name what Post you think wou'd suit your Humour.

Rog. Why I'se pratty indifferent as to that: Secretary of State, or Butler; twenty Shillings more, twenty Shillings less, is not the thing I stand upon. I'se no Hagler, Godswookers; and he that says I am —— 'Zbud he lyes: There's my Humour now.

Esop. But hark you, Friend, you say you are well as you are, why then do you desire to change?

Rog. Why what a Question now is there for a Man of your Parts? I'm well, d'ye see me; and what of all that? I desire to be better: There's an Answer for you. [*Aside.*] Let *Roger* alone with him.

Esop. Very well: This is reasoning; and I love a Man should reason with me. But let us enquire a little whether your Reasons are good or not. You say at home you want for nothing.

Rog. Nothing, 'fore *George*.

Esop. You have good Drink?

Rog. 'Zbud the best i' th' Parish. [*Singing.*] And dawne it merrily goes, my Lad, and dawne it merrily goes.

Esop. You eat heartily?

Rog. I have a noble Stomach.

Esop. You sleep well?

Rog. Just as I drink, till I can sleep no longer.

Esop. You have some honest Neighbours?

Rog. Honest! 'Zbud we are all so, the Tawne raund, we live like Breether; when one can sarve another, he does it with all his Heart and Guts; when we have any thing that's good, we eat it together; Holydays and Sundays we play at Nine-pins, tumble upon the Grass with wholesome young Maids, laugh till we split, daunce till we are weary, eat till we burst, drink till we are sleepy, then swap into Bed, and snore till we rise to Breakfast.

Esop. And all this thou wou'd'st leave to go to Court. I'll tell thee what once happen'd.

A Mouse who long had liv'd at Court,
(Yet ne'er the better Christian *for's)*
Walking one day to see some Country Sport,
He met a home-bred Village-Mouse,
Who with an awkard Speech and Bow,
That savour'd much of Cart and Plow,
Made a shift, I know not how
T' invite him to his House.
Quoth he, My Lord, I doubt you'll find
Our Country Fare of homely kind;
But by my troth, your welcome to't,
Y' have that, and Bread and Cheese to boot:
And so they sat and din'd.

Rog. Very well.

Esop. *The Courtier cou'd have eat at least*
As much as any Houshold Priest,
But thought himself oblig'd in feeding,
To show the difference of Town-breeding;
He pick'd and cull'd, and turn'd the Meat,
He champt and chew'd, and cou'd not eat:

No toothless Woman at Fourscore,
Was ever seen to mumble more.
He made a thousand ugly Faces,
Which (as sometimes in Ladies cases)
Were all design'd for Airs and Graces.
Rog. Ha, ha.
Esop. At last he from the Table rose,
He pickt his Teeth, and blow'd his Nose,
And with an easy Negligence,
As tho he lately came from France,
He made a careless sliding Bow:
'Fore Gad, quoth he, I don't know how
I shall return your friendly Treat;
But if you'll take a bit of Meat
In Town with me,
You there shall see
How we poor Courtiers eat.
Rog. Tit for tat; that was friendly.
Esop. There needed no more Invitation
To e'er a Country Squire i' th' Nation:
Exactly to the time he came,
Punctual, as Woman, when she meets
A Man between a pair of Sheets,
As good a Stomach, and as little Shame.
Rog. He, he, he, he, he.
Esop. To say the truth, he found good Cheer,
With Wine instead of Ale and Beer:
But just as they sat down to eat,
Comes bouncing in a hungry Cat.
Rog. O Lord! O Lord, O Lord!
Esop. The nimble Courtier skipt from Table,
The Squire leapt too, as he was able:
It can't be said that they were beat,
It was no more than a Retreat;
Which when an Army, not to fight
By Day-light, runs away by Night,
Was ever judg'd a great and glorious Feat.
Rog. Ever, ever, ever.
Esop. The Cat retir'd, our Guests return,
The Danger past becomes their Scorn;

They fall to eating, as before,
The Butler rumbles at the Door.

Rog. Good Lord!

Eſop. To Boot and Saddle again they ſound.

Rog. Ta ra, tan tan ta ra, ra ra tan ta ra.

Eſop. They frown, as they won'd ſtand their Ground,
But (like ſome of our Friends) they found
'Tis ſafer much to ſcour.

Rog. Tantive, Tantive, Tantive, &c.

Eſop. At length the Squire, who hated Arms,
Was ſo perplex'd with theſe Alarms,
He roſe up in a kind of Heat:
Udzwooks, quoth he, with all your Meat,
I will maintain a Diſh of Peaſe,
A Radiſh, and a Slice of Cheeſe,
With a good Deſert of Eaſe,
Is much a better Treat.
However,
Since every Man ſhould have his due,
I own, Sir, I'm oblig'd to you
For your Intentions at your Board:
But Pox upon your Courtly Crew———

Rog. Amen, I pray the Lord. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Now the De'el cuckold me if this Story be not worth a Sermon. Give me your Hond, Sir.

——— If it had na' been for your friendly Advice, I was going to be fool enough, to be Secretary of State.

Eſop. Well, go thy ways home, and be wiſer for the future.

Rog. And ſo I will: For that ſame Mauſe, your Friend, was a witty Perſon, Gadsbudlikins; and ſo our Wife *Joan* ſhall know: For between you and I, 'tis ſhe has put me upon going to Court. Sir, ſhe has been ſo praud, ſo ſaucy, ſo rampant, ever ſince I brought her home a lac'd Pinner, and a pink-colour pair of Shoe-ſtrings, from *Tickledawne*-Fair, the Parſon o' th' Pariſh can't rule her; and that you'll ſay's much. But ſo much for that. Naw I thank you for your good Counſel, honeſt little Gentleman; and to ſhew you that I'ſe not ungrateful——Give me your Hond once more———

If you'll take the pains but to walk dawne to our Towne ——— a word in your Ear ——— I'se send you so drunk whome again, you shall remember friendly *Roger* as long as you have breath in your Body. [*Exit* Roger.

Esop solus.

Farewel, what I both envy and despise:
Thy Happiness and Ignorance provoke me.
How noble were the thing call'd Knowledge,
Did it but lead us to a Bliss like thine!
But there's a secret Curse in Wisdom's Train,
Which on its Pleasures stamps perpetual Pain,
And makes the wise Man Loser by his Gain.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

Enter Esop.

Esop. WHO waits there? [*Enter Servants.*
If there be any body that has Business with me, let 'em in.

Serv. Yes, Sir. [*Exit. Serv.*

Enter Quaint, *who stands at a distance, making a great many fawning Bows.*

Esop. Well, Friend, who are you?

Quaint. My Name's *Quaint*, Sir, the profoundest of all your Honour's humble Servants.

Esop. And what may your Business be with me, Sir?

Quaint. My Business, Sir, with every Man, is first of all to do him Service.

Esop. And your next is, I suppose, to be paid for't twice as much as 'tis worth.

Quaint. Your Honour's most obedient, humble Servant.

Esop. Well, Sir, but upon what account am I going to be obliged to you?

Quaint. Sir, I'm a Genealogist.

Esop. A Genealogist!

Quaint. At your Service, Sir.

Esop. So, Sir,

Quaint. Sir, I'm inform'd from common Fame, as well as from ſome little private familiar Intelligence, That your Wiſdom is entring into Treaty with the *Primum Mobile* of Good and Evil, a fine Lady. I have travell'd, Sir; I have read, Sir; I have conſider'd, Sir; and I find, Sir, that the Nature of a fine Lady is to be ——— a fine Lady, Sir; a fine Lady's a fine Lady, Sir, all the World over; ſhe loves a fine Houſe, fine Furniture, fine Clothes, fine Liveries, fine Petticoats, fine Smocks: and if ſhe ſtops there ——— ſhe's a fine Lady indeed, Sir. But to come to my Point.

It being the *Lydian* Cuſtom, that the fair Bride ſhould be preſented on her Wedding-day with ſomething that may ſignify the Merit and the Worth of her dread Lord and Maſter, I thought the noble *Eſop*'s Pedigree might be the welcom'ſt Gift that he could offer. If his Honour be of the ſame Opinion, ——— I'll ſpeak a bold Word; there's ne'er a Herald in all *Aſia* ſhall put better Blood in his Veins, than ——— Sir, your humble Servant, *Jacob Quaint.*

Eſop. Doſt thou then know my Father, Friend? For I proteſt to thee I am a Stranger to him.

Quaint. Your Father, Sir, ha, ha! I know every Man's Father, Sir, and every Man's Grandfather, and every Man's Great Grandfather. Why, Sir, I'm a Herald by Nature, my Mother was a *Welchwoman.*

Eſop. A *Welch woman!* Prithee of what Country's that?

Quaint. That, Sir, is a Country in the World's backſide, where every Man is born a Gentleman, and a Genealogiſt. Sir, I cou'd tell my Mother's Pedigree before I cou'd ſpeak plain; which, to ſhew you the Depth of my Art, and the Strength of my Memory, I'll trundle you down in an inſtant.

Noah had three Sons, *Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japhet*; *Shem* ———

Eſop. Hold, I conjure thee in the Name of all thy Anceſtors.

Quaint. Sir, I cou'd take it higher; but I begin at *Noah* for brevity's ſake.

Eſop. No more on't, I intreat thee.

Quaint. Your Honour's impatient, perhaps, to hear your

your own Descent. *A word to the Wise is enough.* Hem, hem: *Solomon*, the wise King of *Judea*———

Esop. Hold once more!

Quaint. Ha, ha; your Honour's modest, but——— *Solomon*, the wise King of *Judea*———

Esop. Was my Ancestor, was he not?

Quaint. He was, my Lord, which no one sure can doubt, who observes how much of Prince there hangs about you.

Esop. What! Is't in my Mien?

Quaint. You have something———wondrous Noble in your Air.

Esop. Personable too; view me well.

Quaint. N——not Tall; but Majestick.

Esop. My Shape.

Quaint. A World of Symmetry in it.

Esop. The Lump upon my Back.

Quaint. N——not regular; but agreeable.

Esop. Now by my Honesty thou art a Villain, Herald. But Flattery's a Thrust I never fail to parry. 'Tis a Pass thou shou'd'st reserve for young Fencers; with Feints like those they're to be hit: I do not doubt but thou hast found it so; hast not?

Quaint. I must confess, Sir, I have sometimes made 'em bleed by't. But I hope your Honour will please to excuse me, since, to speak the truth, I get my Bread by't, and maintain my Wife and Children: And Industry, you know, Sir, is a commendable thing. Besides, Sir, I have debated the Business a little with my Conscience; for I'm like the rest of my Neighbours, I'd willingly get Money, and be sav'd too, if the thing may be done upon any reasonable Terms: And so, Sir, I say, to quiet my Conscience, I have found out at last, that Flattery is a Duty.

Esop. A Duty!

Quaint. Ay, Sir, a Duty: For the Duty of all Men is to make one another pass their time as pleasantly as they can. Now, Sir, here's a young Lord, who has a great deal of Land, a great deal of Title, a great deal of Meat, a great deal of Noise, a great many Servants, and a great many Diseases. I find him very dull, very restless, tir'd with Ease, cloy'd with Plenty, a Burden to himself, and a Plague to his Family. I begin to flatter: He springs off

of the Couch; turns himself round in the Glass; finds all I say true; cuts a Caper a yard high; his Blood trickles round his Veins; his Heart's as light at his Heels; and before I leave him——his Purse is as empty as his Head. So we both are content: for we part much happier than we met.

Esop. Admirable Rogue! what dost thou think of Murder and of Rape, are not they Duties too? Wer't not for such vile fawning things as thou art, young Nobles wou'd not long be what they are: They'd grow asham'd of Luxury and Ease, and rouse up the old Spirit of their Fathers; leave the pursuit of a poor frighted Hare, and make their Foes to tremble in her stead; furnish their Heads with Sciences and Arts, and fill their Hearts with Honour, Truth and Friendship; be generous to some, and just to all; drive home their Creditors with Bags of Gold, instead of chasing 'em away with Swords and Staves; be faithful to their King and Country both, and stab the Offerer of a Bribe from either; blush even at a wandring Thought of Vice, and boldly own they durst be Friends to Virtue; trembling at nothing but the Frowns of Heaven, and be no more asham'd of him that made 'em.

Quaint. Aside.] If I stand to hear this Crump preach a little longer, I shall be Fool enough perhaps to be bubbled out of my Livelihood, and so lose a Bird in the Hand for two in the Bush.

Sir, since I have not been able to bring you to a good Opinion of your self, 'tis very probable I shall scarce prevail with you to have one of me. But if you please to do me the favour to forget me, I shall ever acknowledge my self,——Sir, your most obedient, faithful humble Servant.

Esop. Hold; if I let thee go, and give thee nothing, thou'lt be apt to grumble at me; and therefore —— who waits there?

Enter Servant.

Quaint. Aside.] I don't like his Looks, by Gad.

Esop. I'll present thee with a Token of my Love.

Quaint. A——another time, Sir, will do as well.

Esop. No; I love to be out of Debt, tho 'tis being out of the Fashion. So, d'ye hear! Give this honest Gentleman half a score good strokes on the back with a Cudgel.

Quaint.

Quaint. By no means in the World, Sir.

Eſop. Indeed, Sir, you ſhall take 'em.

Quaint. Sir, I don't merit half your Bounty.

Eſop. O 'tis but a Trifle.

Quaint. Your Generoſity makes me bluſh.

[*Looking about to make his eſcape.*

Eſop. That's your Modeſty, Sir.

Quaint. Sir, you are pleaſed to compliment. But a ——twenty Pedegrees for a clear Coaſt.

[*Running off, the Servant after him.*

Eſop. Wait upon him down Stairs, Fellow; I'd do't my ſelf, were I but nimble enough; but he makes haſte, to avoid Ceremony.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's a Lady in great haſte, deſires to ſpeak with you.

Eſop. Let her come in.

Enter Aminta, *weeping.*

Amin. O Sir, if you don't help me, I'm undone.

Eſop. What, what's the matter, Lady?

Amin. My Daughter, Sir, my Daughter's run away with a filthy Fellow.

Eſop. A ſlippery Trick indeed!

Amin. For Heaven's ſake, Sir, ſend immediately to purſue 'em, and ſeize 'em: But 'tis in vain, 'twill be too late, 'twill be too late; I'll warrant at this very moment they are got together in a Room with a Couch in't; all's gone, all's gone; tho 'twere made of Gold 'tis loſt: Oh! my Honour, my Honour. A forward Girl ſhe was always; I ſaw it in her Eyes the very Day of her Birth.

Eſop. That indeed was early; but how do you know ſhe's gone with a Fellow?

Amin. I have e'en her own inſolent Hand-writing for't; Sir, take but the pains to read what a Letter ſhe has left me.

Eſop. Reads.

I love, and am belov'd, and that's the reaſon I run away.

Short, but ſignificant!

——*I'm ſure there's no body knows better than your Ladyſhip what Allowances are to be made to Fleſh and Blood;*

Blood; I therefore hope this from your Justice, that what you have done three times your self, you'll pardon once in your Daughter.

The Dickens!

Amin. Now, Sir, what do you think of the Business?

Esop. Why truly, Lady, I think it one of the most natural Businesses I have met with a great while. I'll tell you a Story.

A Crab-fish once her Daughter told,
(In terms that savour'd much of Scold)
She cou'd not bear to see her go,
Sidle, sidle, to and fro;
The Devil's in the Wench, quoth she,
When so much Money has been paid,
To polish you like me;
It makes me almost mad to see
Y'are still so awkard, an ungainly Jade.
Her Daughter smil'd and look'd a-slew,
She answer'd (for to give her due)
Pertly, as most Folks Daughters do:
Madam, your Ladyship, quoth she,
Is pleas'd to blame in me
What, on Enquiry, you may find
Admits a passable Excuse,
From a Proverb much in use,
That Cat will after kind.

Amin. Sir, I took you to be a Man better bred, than to liken a Lady to a Crab-fish.

Esop. What I want in Good-breeding, Lady, I have in Truth and Honesty: As what you have wanted in Vertue, you have had in a good Face.

Amin. Have had, Sir! What I have had, I have still; and shall have a great while, I hope. I'm no Grandmother, Sir.

Esop. But in a fair way for't, Madam.

Amin. Thanks to my Daughter's Forwardness then, not my Years. I'd have you to know, Sir, I have never a Wrinkle in my Face. A young pert Slut! who'd think she shou'd know so much at her Age?

Esop.

Æsop. Good Masters make quick Scholars, Lady; she has learn'd her Exercise from you.

Amin. But where's the Remedy, Sir?

Æsop. In trying if a good Example will reclaim her, as an ill one has debauch'd her. Live private, and avoid Scandal.

Amin. Never speak it; I can no more retire, than I can go to Church twice of a Sunday.

Æsop. What! your youthful Blood boils in your Veins, I'll warrant.

Amin. I have Warmth enough to endure the Air, old Gentleman: I need not shut my self up in a House these twenty Years.

Æsop. Aside.] She takes a long Lease of Loudness; she'll be an admirable Tenant to Lust.

Amin. walking hastily to and fro.] People think when a Woman is turn'd Forty, she's old enough to turn out of the World: But I say, when a Woman is turn'd Forty, she's old enough to have more Wit. The most can be said is, her Face is the worse for wearing: I'll answer for all the rest of her Fabrick. The Men wou'd be to be pity'd, by my Troth, wou'd they, if we shou'd quit the Stage, and leave 'em nothing but a parcel of young pert Sluts, that neither know how to speak Sense, nor keep themselves clean. But don't let 'em fear, we a'n't going yet. —— How now! What, Left alone! An unmannerly Piece of Deformity! Methinks he might have had Sense enough to have made Love to me. But I have found Men strangely dull for the last ten or twelve Years: Sure they'll mend in time, or the World won't be worth living in.

[*Æsop stares upon her, and as she turns from him, runs off the Stage.*

For let Philosophers say all they can,
The Source of Woman's Joys is plac'd in Man.

[Exit.

Enter Learchus *and* Euphronia, Davis *following at a distance.*

Lear. to Euph.] I must tell you, Mistress, I'm too mild with you; Parents shou'd never intreat their Children, nor will I hereafter. Therefore, in a word, let

Æſop be lov'd, let *Orinces* be hated: Let one be a Peacock, let t'other be a Bat; I'm Father, you are Daughter; I command, and you ſhall obey.

Euph. I never yet did otherwiſe; nor ſhall I now, Sir; but pray let Reaſon guide you.

Lear. So it does: But 'tis my own, not yours, Huſſey.

Dor. Ah——Well, I'll ſay no more; but were I in her place, by the Maſs I'd have a tug for't.

Lear. Dæmon, born to diſtract me. Whence art thou, in the name of Fire and Brimſtone? Have I not ſatisfy'd thee? Have I not paid thee what's thy due? And have not I turn'd thee out of doors, with Orders never more to ſtride my Threſhold, Ha? Anſwer, abominable Spirit; what is't that makes thee haunt me?

Dor. A fooliſh Paſſion, to do you good in ſpite of your teeth: Pox on me for my Zeal, I ſay.

Lear. And Pox on thee and thy Zeal too, I ſay.

Dor. Now if it were not for her ſake more than for yours, I'd leave all to your own Management, to be reveng'd on you. But rather than I'll ſee that ſweet thing ſacrificed——I'll play the Devil in your Houſe.

Lear. Patience, I ſummon thee to my Aid.

Dor. Paſſion, I defy thee; to the laſt drop of my Blood I'll maintain my Ground. What have you to charge me with? Speak, I love your Child better than you do, and you can't bear that, ha? Is't not ſo? Nay, it's well y'are aſham'd on't; there's ſome ſign of Grace ſtill.

Look you, Sir, in few words, you'll make me mad; and 'twere enough to make any body mad (who has Brains enough to be ſo) to ſee ſo much Vertue ſhipwreck'd at the very Port. The World never ſaw a Virgin better qualify'd; ſo witty, ſo diſcreet, ſo modeſt, ſo chaſte; in a word, I brought her up my ſelf; and 'twou'd be the death of me, to ſee ſo vertuous a Maid become a lewd Wife; which is the uſual effect of Parents Pride and Covetouſneſs.

Lear. How, Strumpet! wou'd any thing be able to debauch my Daughter?

Dor. Your Daughter! Yes, your Daughter, and my ſelf

ſelf into the Bargain: A Woman's but a Woman; and I'll lay a hundred Pound on Nature's ſide. Come, Sir, few words diſpatch Buſineſs. Let who will be the Wife of *Eſop*, ſhe's a Fool, or he's a Cuckold. But you'll never have a true Notion of this matter, till you ſuppoſe your ſelf in your Daughter's place. As thus:

You are a pretty, ſoft, warm, wiſhing young Lady: I'm a ſtrait, proper, handſome, vigorous, young Fellow.

You have a peeviſh, poſitive, covetous, old Father, and he forces you to marry a little, lean, crooked, dry, ſapleſs Husband. This Husband's gone abroad, you are left at home. I make you a Viſit; find you all alone; the Servant pulls to the Door; the Devil comes in at the Window. I begin to wheedle, you begin to melt; you like my Perſon, and therefore believe all I ſay; ſo firſt I make you an Atheiſt, and then I make you a Whore. Thus the World goes, Sir.

Lear. Pernicious Peſtilence! Has not thy eternal Tongue run down its Larum yet?

Dor. Yes.

Lear. Then go out of my Houſe, Abomination.

Dor. I'll not ſtir a foot.

Lear. Who waits there? Bring me my great Stick.

Dor. Bring you a Stick! bring you a Head-piece: that you'd call for, if you knew your own wants.

Lear. Death and Furies, the Devil, and ſo forth; I ſhall run diſtracted.

Euph. Pray, Sir, don't be ſo angry at her; I'm ſure ſhe means well, tho ſhe may have an odd way of expreſſing herſelf.

Lear. What, you like her meaning? Who doubts it, Offspring of *Venus*? But I'll make you ſtay your Stomach with Meat of my chuſing, you liquoriſh young Baggage you. In a word, *Eſop*'s the Man; and to-morrow he ſhall be your Lord and Maſter.

But ſince he can't be ſatisfy'd unleſs he has your Heart, as well as all the reſt of your Trumpery, let me ſee you receive him in ſuch a manner that he may think himſelf your Choice as well as mine; 'twill make him eſteem your Judgment: For we uſually gueſs at other People's Underſtandings, by their approving our Actions, and

liking our Faces. See here the great Man comes! [*To Dor.*] Follow me, Insolence; and leave 'em to express their Passion to each other. [*To Euph.*] Remember my last word to you is, Obey.

Dor. to Euph. aside.] And remember my last Advice to you is, Rebel. [*Exit* Lear. Dor. *following him.*

Euph. Alas, I'm good-natur'd; the last thing that's said to me usually leaves the deepest Impression.

Enter Esop; *they stand some time without speaking.*

Esop. —— They say, that Lovers, for want of words, have Eyes to speak with. I'm afraid you do not understand the Language of mine, since yours, I find, will make no answer to 'em. But I must tell you, Lady, there is a numerous Train of youthful Virgins, that are endow'd with Wealth and Beauty too, who yet have thought it worth their Pains and Care to point their Darts at *Esop*'s homely Breast; whilst you so much contemn what they pursue, that a young senseless Fop's prefer'd before me.

Euph. Did you but know that Fop you dare to term so, his very Looks wou'd fright you into nothing.

Esop. A very Bauble.

Euph. How!

Esop. A Butterfly.

Euph. I can't bear it.

Esop. A Paroquet, can prattle and look gaudy.

Euph. It may be so; but let me paint him and you in your proper Colours, I'll do it exactly, and you shall judge which I ought to chuse.

Esop. No, hold; I'm naturally not over-curious; besides, 'tis Pride makes People have their Pictures drawn.

Euph. Upon my word, Sir, you may have yours taken a hundred times before any body will believe 'tis done upon that account.

Esop. Aside.] How severe she is upon me!
You are resolv'd then to persist, and be fond of your Feather, sigh for a Perriwig, and die for a Cravat-string.

Euph. Methinks, Sir, you might treat with more respect what I've thought fit to own I value; your Affronts to him are doubly such to me; if you continue your provoking Language, you must expect my Tongue will sally too; and if you are as wise as some would make

make you, you can't but know I shou'd have Theme enough.

Esop. But is it possible you can love so much as you pretend?

Euph. Why do you question it?

Esop. Because no body loves so much as they pretend: But hark you, young Lady, Marriage is to last a long, long time; and where one Couple bless the sacred Knot, a Train of Wretches curse the Institution. You are in an Age where Hearts are young and tender, a pleasing Object gets admittance soon. But since to Marriage there's annex'd this dreadful word, *For Ever*, the following Example ought to move you.

A Peacock once of splendid show,
Gay, gaudy, foppish, vain —— a Beau,
Attack'd a fond young Pheasant's Heart
With such Success,
He pleas'd her, tho he made her smart;
He pierc'd her with so much Address,
She smil'd the moment that he fix his Dart.
A Cuckow in a neighb'ring Tree,
Rink, honest, ugly, old —— like me,
Lov'd her as he lov'd his Life:
No pamper'd Priest e'er study'd more
To make a vertuous Nun a Whore,
Than he to get her for his Wife.
But all his Offers still were vain,
His Limbs were weak, his Face was plain;
Beauty, Youth, and Vigour weigh'd
With the warm desiring Maid:
No Bird, she cry'd, won'd serve her turn,
But what con'd quench as well as burn,
She'd have a young Gallant; so one she had.
But e'er a Month was come and gone,
The Bride began to change her tone,
She found a young Gallant was an inconstant one.
She wander'd to a neighb'ring Grove,
Where after musing long on Love,
She told her Confident, she found
When for one's Life one must be bound,

(The Youth indeed was a delicious Bait)
An aged Husband, rich, tho plain,
Wou'd give a ſlaviſh Wife leſs pain;
And what was more, was ſooner ſlain,
Which was a thing of weight.

Behold, young Lady, here, the Cuckow of the Fable: I'm deform'd, 'tis true, yet I have found the means to make a Figure amongſt Men, that well has recompens'd the Wrongs of Nature; my Rival's Beauty promiſes you much; perhaps my homely Form might yield you more; at leaſt conſider on't, 'tis worth your Thought.

Euph. I muſt confeſs, my Fortune wou'd be greater;
But what's a Fortune to a Heart like mine?
'Tis true, I'm but a young Philoſopher,
Yet in that little ſpace my Glaſs has run,
I've ſpent ſome time in ſearch of Happineſs:
The fond Purſuit I ſoon obſerv'd of Riches,
Inclin'd me to enquire into their Worth;
I found their Value was not in themſelves,
But in their Power to grant what we cou'd ask.
I then proceeded to my own Deſires,
To know what ſtate of Life wou'd ſuit with them:
I found 'em moderate in their Demands,
They neither ask'd for Title, State, or Power;
They ſlighted the aſpiring Poſt of Envy:
'Tis true, they trembled at the name Contempt;
A general Eſteem was all they wiſh'd;
And that I did not doubt might be obtain'd,
If furniſh'd but with Vertue and Good-Nature,
My Fortune prov'd ſufficient to afford me
Conveniencies of Life, and Independence.
This, Sir, was the Reſult of my Enquiry;
And by this Scheme of Happineſs I build,
When I prefer the Man I love to you.

Eſop. How wiſe, how witty, and how cleanly, young Women grow, as ſoon as ever they are in love!

Euph. How ſoppiſh, how impertinent, and how nauſeous are old Men, when they pretend to be ſo too!

Eſop. How pert is Youth!

Euph. How dull is Age!

Eſop. Why ſo ſharp, young Lady?

Euph.

Euph. Why so blunt, old Gentleman?

Esop. 'Tis enough; I'll to your Father, I know how to deal with him, tho I don't know how to deal with you. Before to-morrow Noon, Damsel, Wife shall be written on your Brow. [*Exit* Esop.

Euph. Then before to-morrow Night, Statesman, Husband shall be stampt upon your Forehead. (*Ex.* Euph.

ACT IV.

Enter Oronces *and* Doris.

Dor. PAtience, I beseech you.

Or. Patience! What, and see that lovely Creature thrown into the Arms of that pedantick Monster: 'Sdeath, I'd rather see the World reduc'd to Atoms, Mankind turn'd into Crawfish, and myself an old Woman.

Dor. So you think an old Woman a very unfortunate thing, I find: but you are mistaken, Sir; she may plague other Folks, but she's as entertaining to herself as any one part of the Creation.

Or. walking to and fro.] She's the Devil, —— and I'm one of the Damn'd, I think. But I'll make somebody howl for't, I will so.

Dor. You'll e'en do as all the young Fellows in the Town do, spoil your own Sport: Ah —— had young Mens Shoulders but old Courtiers Heads upon 'em, what a delicious Time wou'd they have on't! For shame be wise; for your Mistress's sake at least use some Caution.

Or. For her sake, I'll respect, even like a Deity, her Father. He shall strike me, he shall tread upon me, and find me humbler even than a crawling Worm, for I'll not turn again; but for *Esop*, that unfinish'd Lump, that Chaos of Humanity, I'll use him, —— nay, expect it, for I'll do't —— the first moment that I see him, I'll ——

Dor. Not challenge him, I hope —— 'Twou'd be a pretty fight truly, to see *Esop* drawn up in Battalia: Fie for shame, be wise once in your Life; think of gaining time, by putting off the Marriage for a day or two,

and not of waging War with a Pigmy. Yonder's the old Gentleman walking by himself in the Gallery; go and wheedle him; you know his weak side, he's good-natur'd in the bottom. Stir up his old fatherly Bowels a little, I'll warrant you'll move him at last: go, get you gone, and play your Part discreetly.

Or. Well, I'll try; but if Words won't do with one, Blows shall with t'other; by Heavens they shall. [*Ex.* Or.

Dor. sola.] Nay, I reckon we shall have rare work on't by and by. Shield us, kind Heaven; what things are Men in love? Now they are Stocks and Stones; then they are Fire and Quicksilver; first whining and crying, then swearing and damning; this moment they are in love, and next moment they are out of love: Ah ——cou'd we but live without 'em——but it's in vain to think on't.

Enter Esop *at one side of the Stage,* Mrs. Forge-will *at t'other.*

Forg. Sir, I am your most devoted Servant: What I say is no Compliment, I do assure you.

Esop. Madam, as far as you are really mine, I believe I may venture to assure you, I am yours.

Forg. I suppose, Sir, you know that I'm a Widow.

Esop. Madam, I don't so much as know you are a Woman.

Forg. O surprising! Why I thought the whole Town had known it. Sir, I have been a Widow this Twelvemonth.

Esop. If a body may guess at your Heart by your Petticoat, Lady, you don't design to be so a Twelvemonth more.

Forg. O bless me! Not a Twelvemonth! Why, my Husband has left me four squawling Brats. Besides, Sir, I'm undone.

Esop. You seem as chearful an undone Lady as I have met with.

Forg. Alas, Sir, I have too great a Spirit ever to let Afflictions spoil my Face. Sir, I'll tell you my Condition, and that will lead me to my Business with you. Sir, my Husband was a Scrivener.

Esop. The deuce he was: I thought he had been a Count at least.

Forg.

Forg. Sir, 'tis not the first time I have been taken for a Countess; my Mother us'd to say as I lay in my Cradle, I had the Air of a Woman of Quality; and truly I have always liv'd like such. My Husband, indeed, had something sneaking in him (as most Husbands have, you know, Sir) but from the moment I set foot in his House, bless me, what a Change was there! His Pewter was turn'd into Silver, his Goloshoes into a Glass Coach, and his little travelling Mare into a pair of *Flanders* Horses. Instead of a greasy Cook-Maid to wait at Table, I had four tall Footmen in clean Linen; all things became new and fashionable, and nothing look'd awkward in my Family. My Furniture was the Wonder of my Neighbourhood, and my Clothes the Admiration of the whole Town: I had a Necklace that was envy'd by the Queen, and a pair of Pendants that set a Duchess a crying. In a word, I saw nothing I lik'd but I bought it; and my Husband, good Man, durst ne'er refuse paying for't. Thus I liv'd, and I flourish'd, till he sicken'd and dy'd; but e'er he was cold in his Grave, his Creditors plunder'd my House. But what pity it was to see Fellows with dirty Shoes come into my best Rooms, and touch my Hangings with their filthy Fingers! You won't blame me, Sir, if with all my Courage I weep at this sensible part of my Misfortune.

Esop. A very sad Story, truly.

Forg. But now, Sir, to my Business. Having been inform'd this Morning, that the King has appointed a great Sum of Money for the Marriage of young Women who have liv'd well, and have fallen to decay. I am come to acquaint you I have two strapping Daughters just fit for the Matter, and to desire you'll help 'em to Portions out of the King's Bounty; that they mayn't whine and pine, and be eaten up with the Green-sickness, as half the young Women in the Town are, or would be, if there were not more Helps for a Disease than one. This, Sir, is my Business.

Esop. And this, Madam, is my Answer.

A crawling Toad, all speckled o'er,
Vain, gaudy, painted, patch'd,——a Whore,

Leaving

Seeing a well-fed Ox hard by,
Regards him with an envious eye;
And (as the Poets tell)
Ye Gods, I cannot bear't, quoth she,
I'll burſt, or be as big as he,
And ſo began to ſwell.
Her Friends and Kindred round her came,
They ſhew'd her ſhe was much to blame,
The thing was out of reach.
She told 'em they were haſty Folks,
And when her Husband won'd have ſpoke,
She bid him kiſs her Br———
With that they all e'en gave her o'er,
And ſhe perſiſted as before,
Till with a deal of Strife
She ſwell'd at laſt ſo much her Spleen,
She burſt like one that we have ſeen,
Who was a Scrivener's Wife.

This Widow, I take to be your Caſe, and that of a great many others; for this is an Age where moſt People get Falls by clambering too high, to reach at what they ſhould not do. The Shoemaker's Wife reduces her Husband to a Cobler, by endeavouring to be as ſpruce as the Taylor's: The Taylor's brings hers to a Botcher, by going as fine as the Mercer's: The Mercer's lowers hers to a Foreman, by perking up to the Merchant's: The Merchant's wears hers to a Broker, by ſtrutting up to Quality: And Quality brings theirs to nothing, by ſtriving to out-do one another. If Women were humbler, Men wou'd be honeſter. Pride brings Want, Want makes Rogues, Rogues come to be hang'd, and the Devil alone's the Gainer. Go your ways home, Woman; and as your Husband maintain'd you by his Pen, maintain your ſelf by your Needle; put your great Girls to Service, Employment will keep 'em honeſt; much Work, and plain Diet, will cure the Green-ſickneſs as well as a Husband.

Forg. Why you puiſul Pigmy, preaching, canting, Pickthank; you little, ſorry, crooked, dry, wither'd Eunuch, do you know that———

Eſop. I know that I'm ſo deform'd you han't Wit e-

nough

nough to describe me; but I have this good quality, That a foolish Woman can never make me angry.

Forg. Can't she so! I'll try that, I will. [*She falls upon him, holds his Hands, and boxes his Ears.*

Esop. Help, help, help.

Enter Servants. She runs off, they after her.

Esop. Nay, e'en let her go——let her go——don't bring her back again——I'm for making a Bridge of Gold for my Enemy to retreat upon——I'm quite out of breath——A terrible Woman, I protest.

Enter a Country Gentleman drunk, in a Hunting-Dress, with a Huntsman, Groom, Faulkner, and other Servants; one leading a couple of Hounds, another Greyhounds, a third a Spaniel, a fourth a Gun upon his Shoulder, the Faulkner a Hawk upon his Fist, &c.

Gent. Haux, haux, haux, haux, haux: Joular, there Boy, Joular, Joular, Tinker, Pedlar, Miss, Miss, Miss, Miss——Blood and Oons——O there he is; that must be he, I have seen his Picture, [*Reeling up to Esop*]——Sir——if your Name's *Esop*——I'm your humble Servant.

Esop. Sir, my Name is *Esop*, at your Service.

Gent. Why then, Sir——Compliments being past on both sides, with your leave——we'll proceed to Business.

Sir, I'm by Profession——a Gentleman of——three thousand Pounds a Year——Sir, I keep a good pack of Hounds, and a good Stable of Horses.

To his Groom.] How many Horses have I, Sirrah?——Sir, this is my Groom, [*Presenting him to Esop.*

Groom. Your Worship has six Coach-Horses, (Cut and Long-Tail) two Runners, half a dozen Hunters, four breeding Mares, and two blind Stallions, besides Pads, Roans, and Dog-Horses.

Gent. Look you there, Sir, I scorn to tell a——He that questions my Honour——he's a Son of a Whore. But to Business——Having heard, Sir, that you were come to this Town, I have taken the pains to come hither too, tho I had a great deal of Business upon my hands, for I have appointed three Justices of the

Peace

Peace to hunt with 'em this Morning——and be drunk with 'em in the Afternoon. But the main Chance muſt be look'd to——and that's this——I deſire, Sir, you'll tell the King from me——I don't like theſe Taxes——in one word, as well as in twenty——I don't like theſe Taxes.

Eſop. Pray, Sir, how high may you be tax'd?

Gent. How high may I be tax'd, Sir!——Why, I may be tax'd, Sir,—— four Shillings in the Pound, Sir; one half I pay in Money——and t'other half I pay in Perjury, Sir. Hey, Joular, Joular, Joular. Haux, haux, haux, haux, haux. Whoo, hoo——Here's the beſt Hound-Bitch in *Europe*, Zoons is ſhe. And I had rather kiſs her than kiſs my Wife——Rot me if I had not——But, Sir, I don't like theſe Taxes.

Eſop. Why how wou'd you have the War carry'd on?

Gent. War carry'd on, Sir!—— Why, I had rather have no War carry'd on at all, Sir, than pay Taxes. I don't deſire to be ruin'd, Sir.

Eſop. Why you ſay you have 3000 Pounds a Year.

Gent. And ſo I have, Sir——*Lett-Acre.* Sir, this is my Steward. How much Land have I, *Lett-Acre*?

Lett-Acre. Your Worſhip has three thauſand Paunds a Yeſar, as good Lond as any's i'th' Caunty; and two thauſand Paunds worth of Wood to cut dawne at your Worſhip's Pleaſure, and put the Money in your Pocket.

Gent. Look you there, Sir, what have you to ſay to that?

Eſop. I have to ſay, Sir, that you may pay your Taxes in Money, inſtead of Perjury, and ſtill have a better Revenue than I'm afraid you deſerve. What Service do you do your King, Sir?

Gent. None at all, Sir——I'm above it.

Eſop. What Service may you do your Country, pray?

Gent. I'm Juſtice of the Peace——and Captain of the Militia.

Eſop. Of what uſe are you to your Kindred?

Gent. I'm the Head of the Family, and have all the Eſtate.

Eſop. What good do you do your Neighbours?

Gent. I give 'em their Bellies full of Beef every time they

they come to see me; and make 'em so drunk, they spew it up again before they go away.

Esop. How do you use your Tenants?

Gent. Why I shrew up their Rents till they break and run away, and if I catch 'em again, I let 'em rot in a Goal.

Esop. How do you treat your Wife?

Gent. I treat her all Day with Ill-nature and Tobacco, and all Night with Snoring and a dirty Shirt.

Esop. How do you breed your Children?

Gent. I breed my eldest Son——a Fool; my youngest breed themselves, and my Daughters——have no Breeding at all.

Esop. 'Tis very well, Sir, I shall be sure to speak to the King of you; or if you think fit to remonstrate to him, by way of Petition or Address, how reasonable it may be to let Men of your Importance go Scot-free, in the time of a necessary War, I'll deliver it in Council, and speak to it as I ought.

Gent. Why, Sir, I don't disapprove your Advice, but my Clerk is not here, and I can't spell well.

Esop. You may get it writ at your leisure, and send it me. But because you are not much us'd to draw up Addresses perhaps, I'll tell you in general what kind of one this ought to be.

May it please your Majesty——

To the Gent.] You'll excuse me if I don't know your Name and Title.

Gent. Sir, *Polidorus Hogsbye*, of *Beast-Hall* in *Swine-Country*.

Esop. Very well.

May it please your Majesty; Polidorus Hogsbye, *of* Beast-Hall *in* Swine-County, *most humbly represents, That he hates to pay Taxes, the dreadful Consequences of 'em being inevitably these: That he must entertain two Dishes in ten, where not above six of 'em are design'd for Gluttony.*

Four Bottles out of twenty; where not above fifteen of 'em are for Drunkenness.

Six Horses out of thirty, of which not above twenty are kept for State.

And

And four Servants out of a Score; where one half do nothing but make Work for t'other.

To this deplorable Condition must your important Subject be reduc'd, or forced to cut down his Timber, which he would willingly preserve against an ill Run at Dice.

And as to the Necessity of the War for the Security of the Kingdom, he neither knows nor cares whether it be necessary or not.

He concludes with his Prayers for your Majesty's Life, upon Condition you will protect him and his Fox-hounds at Beast-hall without e'er a Penny of Money.

To the Gent.] This, Sir, I suppose, is much what you wou'd be at?

Gent. Exactly, Sir; I'll be sure to have one drawn up to the self-same purpose; and next Fox-hunting I'll engage half the Company shall set their Hands to't.

Sir, I am your——most devoted Servant; and if you please to let me see you at *Beast-Hall*, here's my Huntsman *Houndsfoot* will shew you a Fox shall lead you through so many Hedges and Briars, you shall have no more Clothes on your Back in half an hour's time—— than you had ——— in the Womb of your Mother. Haux, haux, haux, *&c.*

Esop. O Tempora, O Mores!

Enter Mr. Fruitful *and his Wife.*

Mr. *Fruit.* Heavens preserve the noble *Esop*, grant him long Life and happy Days.

Mrs. *Fruit.* And send him a fruitful Wife, with a hopeful Issue.

Esop. And what is it I'm to do for you, good People, to make you amends for all those friendly Wishes?

Mr. *Fruit.* Sir, here's my self and my Wife——

Mrs. *Fruit.* Sir, here's I and my Husband——

To her Husband.] Let me speak in my turn, Goodman *Forward*.

To Esop.] Sir, here's I and my Husband, I say, think we have as good Pretensions to the King's Favour as ever a Lord in the Land.

Esop. If you have no better than some Lords in the Land, I hope you won't expect much for your Service.

Mr. *Fruit.* An't please you, you shall be Judge yourself.

Mrs.

Mrs. Fruit. That's as he gives Sentence, Mr. *Littlewit*; who gave you power to come to a Reference? If he does not do us Right, the King himself shall; what's to be done here!

To Esop.] Sir I'm forc'd to correct my Husband a little; poor Man, he is not us'd to Court-Business; but to give him his due, he's ready enough at some things: Sir, I have had twenty fine Children by him; fifteen of 'em are alive, and alive like to be; five tall Daughters are wedded and bedded, and ten proper Sons serve their King and their Country.

Esop. A goodly Company, upon my word!

Mrs. Fruit. Would all Men take as much pains for the peopling the Kingdom, we might tuck up our Aprons, and cry a Fig for our Enemies; but we have such a parcel of Drones amongst us——Hold up your Head, Husband—— He's a little out of countenance, Sir, because I chid him; but the Man's a very good Man at the bottom. But to come to my Business, Sir; I hope his Majesty will think it reasonable to allow me something for the Service I have done him; 'tis pity but Labour shou'd be encourag'd, especially when what one has done, one has don't with a Good-will.

Esop. What Profession are you of, good People?

Mrs. Fruit. My Husband's an Innkeeper, Sir; he bears the Name, but I govern the House.

Esop. And what Posts are your Sons in, in the Service?

Mrs. Fruit. Sir, there are four Monks.

Mr. Fruit. Three Attorneys.

Mrs. Fruit. Two Scriveners.

Mr. Fruit. And an Excise-Man.

Esop. The deux o' th' Service; why, I thought they had been all in the Army.

Mrs. Fruit. Not one, Sir.

Esop. No, so it seems, by my troth: Ten Sons that serve their Country, quoth a! Monks, Attorneys, Scriveners and Excise-Men, serve their Country with a vengeance; you deserve to be rewarded, truly; you deserve to be hang'd, you wicked People you. Get you gone out of my sight: I never was so angry in my Life. [*Ex. Esop.*

Mr. Fruit. *to his Wife.*] So; who's in the right now, you or I? I told you what wou'd come on't; you must be always a Breeding, and Breeding, and the King wou'd take care of 'em, and the Queen wou'd take care of 'em: And always some pretence or other there was. But now we have got a great Kennel of Whelps, and the Devil will take care of 'em, for ought I see. For your Sons are all Rogues, and your Daughters are all Whores, you know they are.

Mrs. *Fruit.* What, you are a grudging of your Pains now, you lazy, sluggish, flegmatick Drone. You have a mind to die of a Lethargy, have you? but I'll raise your Spirits for you, I will so. Get you gone home, go; go home, you idle Sot, you, I'll raise your Spirits for you. [*Exit. pushing him before her*

Re-enter Esop.

Esop solus.] Monks, Attorneys, Scriveners, and Excisemen!

Enter Oronces.

Or. O here he is. Sir, I have been searching for you, to say two words to you.

Esop. And now you have found me, Sir, what are they?

Or. They are, Sir —— that my Name's *Oronces*; you comprehend me.

Esop. I comprehend your Name.

Or. And not my Business?

Esop. Not I, by my Troth.

Or. Then I shall endeavour to teach it you, Mons. *Esop.*

Esop. And I to learn it, Monsieur *Oronces.*

Or. Know, Sir —— that I admire *Euphronia.*

Esop. Know, Sir —— that you are in the right on't.

Or. But I pretend, Sir, that no body else shall admire her.

Esop. Then I pretend, Sir, she won't admire you.

Or. Why so, Sir?

Esop. Because, Sir ——

Or. What, Sir?

Esop. She's a Woman, Sir.

Or. What then, Sir?

Esop. Why then, Sir, she desires to be admir'd by every Man she meets.

Or. Sir, you are too familiar.

Esop.

Esop. Sir, you are too haughty; I must soften that harsh Tone of yours: It don't become you, Sir; it makes a Gentleman appear a Porter, Sir: And that you may know the use of good Language, I'll tell you what once happen'd.

Once on a Time——

Or. I'll have none of your old Wives Fables, Sir, I have no Time to lose; therefore, in a word——

Esop. In a word, be mild: For nothing else will do you Service. Good Manners and soft Words have brought many a difficult thing to pass. Therefore hear me patiently.

A Cook one Day, who had been drinking,
(Only as many times, you know,
You Spruce, Young, Witty Beaux will do,
T' avoid the dreadful pain of Thinking)
Had Orders sent him to behead
A Goose, like any Chaplain fed.
He took such pains to set his Knife right,
'T had done one good t' have lost one's Life by't.
But many Men have many Minds,
There's various Tastes in various Kinds;
A Swan (who by mistake he seiz'd)
With wretched Life was better pleas'd:
For as he went to give the Blow,
In tuneful Notes she let him know,
She neither was a Goose, nor wish'd
To make her Exit so.
The Cook (who thought of nought but Blood,
Except it were the Grease,
For that you know's his Fees)
To hear her sing, in great Amazement stood.
Cods-Fish, quoth he, 'twas well you spoke,
For I was just upon the Stroke:
Your Feathers have so much of Goose,
A drunken Cook cou'd do no less
Than think you one; that you'll confess:
But y'have a Voice so soft, so sweet,
That rather than you shall be eat,
The House shall starve for want of Meat:
And so he turn'd her loose.

To Or.] Now, Sir, what say you? Will you be the Swan, or the Goose?

Or. The Choice can't, sure, be difficult to make;
I hope you will excuse my youthful Heat,
Young Men and Lovers have a claim to Pardon:
But since the Faults of Age have no such Plea,
I hope you'll be more cautious of offending.
The Flame that warms *Euphronia*'s Heart and mine,
Has long, alas! been kindled in our Breasts:
Even Years are past since our two Souls were wed,
'Twou'd be Adultery but to wish to part 'em.
And wou'd a Lump of Clay alone content you,
A Mistress cold and senseless in your Arms,
Without the least Remains or Signs of Life,
Except her Sighs, to mourn her absent Lover?
Whilst you shou'd press her in your eager Arms,
With fond Desire and Extasy of Love,
Wou'd it not pierce you to the very Soul,
To see her Tears run trickling down her Cheeks,
And know their Fountain meant 'em all to me?
Cou'd you bear this?
Yet thus the Gods revenge themselves on those
Who stop the happy Course of mutual Love.
If you must be unfortunate one way,
Chuse that where Justice may support your Grief,
And shun the weighty Curse of injur'd Lovers.

Esop. Why, this is pleading like a Swan indeed!
Were any thing at stake but my *Euphronia*——

Or. Your *Euphronia*, Sir——

Esop. The Goose—— take heed——
Were any think, I say, at stake but her,
Your Plea wou'd be too strong to be refus'd.
But our Debate's about a Lady, Sir,
That's Young, that's Beautiful, that's made for Love:
—— so am not I, you'll say? But you're mistaken Sir; I'm made to love, tho not to be belov'd. I have a Heart like yours; I've Folly too: I've every Instrument of Love like others.

Or. But, Sir, you have not been so long a Lover;
Your Passion's young and tender,
'Tis easy for you to become its Master;

Whilst

Whilſt I ſhou'd ſtrive in vain; mine's old and fixt.

Eſop. The older 'tis, the eaſier to be govern'd; Were mine of as long a ſtanding, 'twere poſſible I might get the better on't. Old Paſſions are like old Men; weak, and ſoon joſtled into the Kennel.

Or. Yet Age ſometimes is ſtrong, even to the Verge of Life.

Eſop. Ay, but there our Compariſon don't hold.

Or. You are too merry to be much in love.

Eſop. And you too ſad to be ſo long.

Or. My Grief may end my days, ſo quench my Flame; but nothing elſe can e'er extinguiſh it.

Eſop. Don't be diſcourag'd, Sir; I have ſeen many a Man out-live his Paſſion twenty Years.

Or. But I have ſworn to die *Euphronia*'s Slave.

Eſop. A decay'd Face always abſolves a Lover's Oath.

Or. Lovers whoſe Oaths are made to Faces then: But 'tis *Euphronia*'s Soul that I adore, which never can decay.

Eſop. I wou'd fain ſee a young Fellow in Love with a Soul of Threeſcore.

Or. Quit but *Euphronia* to me, and you ſhall;
At leaſt if Heaven's Bounty will afford us
But Years enough to prove my Conſtancy,
And this is all I ask the Gods and you. [*Exit* Or.

Eſop ſolus.

A good Pretence however to beg long Life.
How groſly do the Inclinations of the Fleſh
Impoſe upon the Simplicity of the Spirit!
Had this young Fellow but ſtudy'd Anatomy, he'd have found the Source of his Paſſion lay far from his Miſtreſs's Soul.
Alas! Alas!
Had Women no more Charms in their Bodies,
Than what they have in their Minds,
We ſhould ſee more wiſe Men in the World,
And much fewer Lovers and Poets. [*Exit*

ACT V.

Enter Euphronia *and* Doris.

Euph. HEavens, what is't you make me do, *Doris?* Apply my ſelf to the Man I loath; beg Favours from him I hate; ſeek a Reprieve from him I abhor; 'tis low, 'tis mean, 'tis baſe in me.

Dor. Why, you hate the Devil as much as you do *Eſop*, (or within a ſmall matter) and ſhould you think it a ſcandal to pray him to let you alone a day or two, if he were a going to run away with you; ha?

Euph. I don't know what I think, nor what I ſay, nor what I do: But ſure thou'rt not my Friend thus to adviſe me.

Dor. I adviſe! I adviſe nothing; e'en follow your own way; marry him, and make much of him. I have a mind to ſee ſome of his Breed; if you like it, I like it: He ſhan't breed out of me only; that's all I have to take care of.

Euph. Prithee don't diſtract me.

Dor. Why, to-morrow's the Day, fix'd and firm, you know it; much Meat, little Order, great many Relations, few Friends, Horſe-play, Noiſe, and bawdy Stories, all's ready for a compleat Wedding.

Euph. Oh! what ſhall I do?

Dor. Nay, I know this makes you tremble; and yet your tender Conſcience ſcruples to drop one hypocritical Curt'ſy, and ſay, Pray, Mr. *Eſop*, be ſo kind to defer it a few days longer.

Euph. Thou know'ſt I cannot diſſemble.

Dor. I know you can diſſemble well enough when you ſhou'd not do't. Do you remember how you us'd to plague your poor *Orontes*; make him believe you loath'd him, when you cou'd have kiſs'd the ground he went on; affront him in all publick Places; ridicule him in all Company; abuſe him wherever you went: and when you had reduc'd him within an Ace of hanging or drowning, then come home with Tears in your Eyes, and cry, Now, *Doris*, let's go lock our ſelves up, and talk of my dear *Orontes*: Is not this true?

Euph. Yes, yes, yes. But, prithee, have ſome Compaſſion

passion of me. Come, I'll do any thing thou bid'st me——What shall I say to this Monster? Tell me, and I'll obey thee.

Dor. Nay, then there's some hopes of you. Why you must tell him——'Tis natural to you to dislike Folks at first sight: That since you have consider'd him better, you find your Aversion abated: That though perhaps it may be a hard matter for you ever to think him a Beau, you don't despair in time of finding out his *Je-ne-scay-quoy*. And that on t'other side; tho you have hitherto thought (as most young Women do) that nothing cou'd remove your first Affection, yet you have very great hopes in the natural Inconstancy of your Sex.

Tell him, 'tis not impossible a Change may happen, provided he gives you time: But that if he goes to force you, there's another piece of Nature peculiar to Woman, which may chance to spoil all, and that's Contradiction: Ring that Argument well in his Ears: He's a Philosopher, he knows it has weight in it.

In short, wheedle, whine, flatter, lye, weep, spare nothing; it's a moist Age, Women have Tears enough; and when you have melted him down, and gain'd more time, we'll employ it in Closet-debates how to cheat him to the end of the Chapter.

Euph. But you don't consider, *Doris*, that by this means I engage my self to him; and can't afterwards with Honour retreat.

Dor. Madam, I know the World——Honour's a Jest, when Liking's useful.

Besides, he that wou'd have you break your Oath with *Oronces*, can never have the Impudence to blame you for cracking your Word with himself. But who knows what may happen between the Cup and the Lip? Let either of the old Gentlemen die, and we ride triumphant. Wou'd I cou'd but see the Statesman sick a little, I'd recommend a Doctor to him, a Cousin of mine, a Man of Conscience, a wise Physician; tip but the Wink, he understands you.

Euph. Thou wicked Wench, would'st poison him?

Dor. I don't know what I wou'd do, I think, I study, I invent, and somehow I will get rid of him. I do more for you, I'm sure, than you and your Knight Errant do together for your selves.

Euph.

Euph. Alas, both he and I do all we can; thou know'ſt we do.

Dor. Nay, I know y'are willing enough to get together; but y'are a couple of helpleſs Things, Heaven knows.

Euph. Our Stars, thou ſee'ſt, are bent to Oppoſition.

Dor. Stars——I'd fain ſee the Stars hinder me from running away with a Man I lik'd.

Euph. Ay, but thou know'ſt, ſhou'd I diſoblige my Father, he'd give my Portion to my younger Siſter.

Dor. Ay, there the Shoe pinches, there's the Love of the Age! Ah!——to what an ebb of Paſſion are Lovers ſunk in theſe days! Give me a Woman that runs away with a Man, when his whole Eſtate's pack'd up in his Snap-ſack: That tucks up her Coats to her Knees; and through thick and through thin, from Quarters to Camp, trudges heartily on, with a Child at her Back, another in her Arms, and a Brace in her Belly: There's Flame with a Witneſs, where this is the Effects on't. But we muſt have Love in a Feather-bed, forſooth, a Coach and ſix Horſes, clean Linen, and a Cawdle! Fie, for ſhame.

O ho, here comes our Man. Now ſhew your ſelf a Woman, if you are one.

Enter Eſop.

Eſop. I'm told, fair Virgin, you deſire to ſpeak with me. Lovers are apt to flatter themſelves; I take your Meſſage for a Favour. I hope 'twas meant ſo.

Euph. Favours from Women are ſo cheap of late, Men may expect 'em truly without Vanity.

Eſop. If the Women are ſo liberal, I think the Men are generous too on their ſide: 'Tis a well-bred Age, thank Heaven; and a deal of Civility there paſſes between the two Sexes. What Service is't that I can do you, Lady?

Euph. Sir, I have a ſmall Favour to intreat you.

Eſop. What is't? I don't believe I ſhall refuſe you.

Euph. What if you ſhou'd promiſe me you won't?

Eſop. Why then I ſhou'd make a divorce between my Good-breeding and my Senſe, which ought to be as ſacred a Knot as that of Wedlock.

Euph. Dare you not truſt then, Sir, the thing you love?

Eſop. Not when the thing I love don't love me: Never.

Dor. Truſt is ſometimes the way to be belov'd.

Eſop.

Esop. Ay, but 'tis oftner the way to be cheated.

Euph. Pray promise me you'll grant my Suit.

Dor. 'Tis a reasonable one, I give you my word for't.

Esop. If it be so, I do promise to grant it.

Dor. That's still leaving your self Judge.

Esop. Why, who's more concern'd in the Tryal?

Dor. But no body ought to be Judge in their own Cause.

Esop. Yet he that is so, is sure to have no wrong done him.

Dor. But if he does wrong to others, that's worse.

Esop. Worse for them, but not for him.

Dor. True Politician, by my troth!

Esop. Men must be so when they have to do with Sharpers.

Euph. If I should tell you then there were a possibility I might be brought to love you, you'd scarce believe me.

Esop. I shou'd hope as a Lover, and suspect as a Statesman.

Dor. aside.] Love and Wisdom! There's the Passion of the Age again.

Euph. You have liv'd long, Sir, and observ'd much: Did you never see Time produce strange Changes?

Esop. Amongst Women, I must confess I have.

Euph. Why, I'm a Woman, Sir.

Esop. Why, truly that gives me some hopes.

Euph. I'll increase 'em, Sir; I have already been in love two years.

Dor. And Time, you know, wears all things to tatters.

Esop. Well observ'd.

Euph. What if you shou'd allow me some to try what I can do?

Esop. Why, truly, I would have patience a day or two, if there was as much probability of my being your new Gallant, as perhaps there may be of changing your old one.

Dor. She shall give you fair play for't, Sir; Opportunity and Leave to prattle, and that's what carries most Women in our days. Nay, she shall do more for you. You shall play with her Fan; squeeze her little Finger; buckle her Shoe; read a Romance to her in the Arbour; and saunter in the Woods on a Moonshiny Night. If this don't melt her, she's no Woman, or you no Man ———

Esop. I'm not a Man to melt a Woman that way: I know my self, and know what they require. 'Tis

thrugh

through a Woman's Eye you pierce her Heart. And I've no Darts can make their entrance there.

Dor. You are a great Statesman, Sir; but I find you know little of our Manners. A Woman's Heart is to be enter'd forty ways. Every Sense she has about her keeps a door to it. With a Smock-face, and a Feather, you get in at her Eyes. With powerful Nonsense, in soft words, you creep in at her Ears. An essenc'd Peruke, and a sweet Handkerchief, lets you in at her Nose. With a Treat, and a Box full of Sweet-meats, you slip in at her Mouth: and if you would enter by her Sense of Feeling, 'tis as beaten a Road as the rest. What think you now, Sir? *There are more ways to the Wood than one*, you see.

Esop. Why, you're an admirable Pilot; I don't doubt but you have steer'd many a Ship safe to Harbour: But I'm an old stubborn Seaman; I must sail by my own Compass still.

Euph. And, by your Obstinacy, lose your Vessel.

Esop. No: I'm just entring into Port; we'll be married to-morrow.

Euph. For Heaven's sake defer it some days longer: I cannot love you yet, indeed I cannot.

Esop. Nor never will, I dare swear.

Euph. Why then will you marry me?

Esop. Because I love you.

Euph. If you lov'd me, you wou'd never make me miserable.

Esop. Not if I lov'd you for your sake; but I love you for my own.

Dor. aside.] There's an old Rogue for you.

Euph. weeping.] Is there no way left! must I be wretched?

Esop. 'Tis but resolving to be pleas'd. You can't imagine the strength of Resolution. I have seen a Woman resolve to be in the wrong all the days of her Life; and by the help of her Resolution, she has kept her word to a title.

Euph. Methinks the Subject we're upon shou'd be of weight enough to make you serious.

Esop. Right: To-morrow Morning pray be ready; You'll find me so: I'm serious. Now I hope you are pleas'd. [*Turning away from her.*

Euph.

Euph. *going off weeping, and leaning upon* Doris.] Break, Heart; for if thou holdſt, I'm miſerable.

Dor. to *Eſop.*] Now may the Extravagance of a lewd Wife, with the Inſolence of a vertuous one, join hand in hand, to bring thy grey Hairs to the Grave.

[*Exeunt* Euphronia *and* Doris.

Eſop. My old Friend wiſhes me well to the laſt, I ſee.

Enter Learchus *haſtily, follow'd by* Oronces.

Or. Pray hear me, Sir.

Lear. 'Tis in vain: I'm reſolv'd, I tell thee.

Moſt noble *Eſop*, ſince you are pleas'd to accept of my poor Off-ſpring for your Conſort, be ſo charitable to my old Age, to deliver me from the Impertinence of Youth, by making her your Wife this inſtant; for there's a Plot againſt my Life; they have reſolv'd to teaze me to Death to-night, that they may break the Match to-morrow Morning. Marry her this inſtant, I intreat you.

Eſop. This inſtant, ſay you!

Lear. This inſtant; this very inſtant.

Eſop. 'Tis enough; get all things ready; I'll be with you in a moment.

[*Exit* Eſop.

Lear. Now, what ſay you, Mr. *Flame-fire?* I ſhall have the whip-hand of you preſently.

Or. Defer it till to-morrow, Sir.

Lear. That you may run away with her to-night; Ha? ——— Sir, your moſt obedient, humble Servant. Hey, who waits there? Call my Daughter to me: Quick. I'll give her her Diſpatches preſently.

Enter Euphronia.

Euph. D'ye call, Sir?

Lear. Yes I do, Minx. Go ſhift your ſelf, and put on your beſt Clothes. You are to be marry'd.

Euph. Marry'd, Sir!

Lear. Yes, marry'd, Madam; and that this inſtant too.

Euph. Dear, Sir!

Lear. Not a word: Obedience and a clean Smock; Diſpatch.

[*Exit* Euphronia *weeping.*

Learchus *going off, turns to* Oronces.] Sir, your moſt obedient humble Servant.

Or. Yet hear what I've to ſay.

Lear. And what have you to ſay, Sir?

Or.

Or. Alas! I know not what I have to say!

Lear. Very like so. That's a sure sign he's in love now.

Or. Have you no Bowels?

Lear. Ha, ha! Bowels in a Parent! Here's a young Fellow for you. Hark thee, Stripling; being in a very merry humour, I don't care if I discover some paternal Secrets to thee.

Know then, that how humoursome, how whimsical soever we may appear, there's one first Principle that runs through almost the whole Race of us; and that's to please our selves. Why do'st think I got my Daughter? Why, there was something in't that pleas'd me. Why do'st think I marry my Daughter? Why to please my self still. And what is't that pleases me? Why, my Interest; what do'st think it shou'd be? If *Esop*'s my Son-in-Law, he'll make me a Lord: If thou art my Son-in-Law——thou'lt make me a Grandfather. Now I having more mind to be a Lord than a Grandfather, give my Daughter to him, and not to thee.

Or. Then shall her Happiness weigh nothing with you?

Lear. Not this. If it did, I'd give her to thee, and not to him.

Or. Do you think forc'd Marriage the way to keep Women vertuous?

Lear. No; nor I don't care whether Women are vertuous or not.

Or. You know your Daughter loves me.

Lear. I do so.

Or. What if the Children that *Esop* may happen to father shou'd chance to be begot by me?

Lear. Why, then *Esop* wou'd be the Cuckold, not I.

Or. Is that all your Care?

Lear. Yes: I speak as a Father.

Or. What think you of your Child's Concern in t'other World?

Lear. Why, I think it my Child's Concern, not mine. I speak as a Father.

Or. Do you remember you once gave me your Consent to wed your Daughter?

Lear. I did.

Or. Why did you so?

Lear.

Lear. Becauſe you were the beſt Match that offer'd at that time, I did like a Father.

Or. Why then, Sir, I do like a Lover. I'll make you keep your word, or cut your Throat.

Lear. Who waits there, ha? [*Enter Servants.* Seize me that Bully there. Carry him to Priſon, and keep him ſafe. [*They ſeize him.*

Or. Why, you won't uſe me thus?

Lear. Yes, but I will tho: away with him. Sir, your moſt humble Servant: I wiſh you a good Night's reſt; and as far as a merry Dream goes, my Daughter's at your Service.

Or. Death and Furies! [*Exeunt Serv. with* Oron.

Lear. ſinging.] *Dol, de tol dol, dol, de tol dol:*
Lilly Burleighre's lodg'd in a Bough.

Enter a Troop of Muſicians, Dancers, &c.

Lear. How now! What have we got here?

Muſ. Sir, we are a Troop of trifling Fellows, Fidlers, and Dancers, come to celebrate the Wedding of your fair Daughter, if your Honour pleaſes to give us leave.

Lear. With all my heart: But who do you take me for, Sir; ha?

Muſ. I take your Honour for our noble Governor of *Syſicus.*

Lear. Governor of *Syſicus*; Governor of a Cheeſe-Cake! I'm Father-in-Law to the great *Eſop*, Sirrah. [*All bow to him.*

Aſide.] —— I ſhall be a great Man.
Come, tune your Fiddles; ſhake your Legs; get all things ready. My Son-in-Law will be here preſently —— I ſhall be a great Man. [*Exit.*

Muſ. A great Marriage, Brother: What do'ſt think will be the end on't?

2 *Muſ.* Why, I believe we ſhall ſee three Turns upon't. This old Fellow here will turn Fool; his Daughter will turn Strumpet; and his Son-in-Law will turn 'em both out of doors. But that's nothing to thee nor me, as long as we are paid for our Fiddling. So tune away, Gentlemen.

1 *Muſ.* D'ye hear, Trumpets! When the Bride appears, ſalute her with a melancholy Waſt. 'Twill ſuit her Humour; for I gueſs ſhe mayn't be over-well pleas'd.

Enter Learchus *with ſeveral Friends and a Prieſt.*

Lear. Gentlemen and Friends, y'are all welcome. I have ſent to as many of you as our ſhort time would give me leave, to deſire you wou'd be Witneſſes of the Honour the great *Eſop* deſigns our ſelf and Family. Hey; who attends there?

Go let my Daughter know I wait for he. [*Ex. Serv.* —— 'Tis a vaſt Honour that is done me, Gentlemen.

2 *Gent.* It is indeed, my Lord.

Lear. aſide.] Look you there; if they don't call me my Lord already —— I ſhall be a great Man.

Enter Euphronia *weeping, and leaning upon* Doris, *both in deep Mourning.*

Lear. How now! What's here? All in deep Mourning! Here's a provoking Baggage for you.

[*The Trumpets ſound a melancholy Air till* Eſop *appears; and then the Violins and Hautboys ſtrike up a* Lancaſhire *Hornpipe.*

Enter Eſop *in a gay ſoppiſh Dreſs, Long Peruke, &c. a gaudy Equipage of Pages and Footmen, all enter in an airy brisk manner.*

Eſop, *in an affected Tone to* Euphronia.] Gad take my Soul, Mame, I hope I ſhall pleaſe you now —— Gentlemen all, I'm your humble Servant. I'm going to be a very happy Man, you ſee.

To Euph. When the heat of the Ceremony's over, if your Ladyſhip pleaſes, Mame, I'll wait upon you to take the Air in the Park. Hey, Page; let there be a Coach and ſix Horſes read inſtantly.

Obſerving her Dreſs.] —— I vow to Gad, Mame, I was ſo taken up with my good Fortune, I did not obſerve the extreme Fancy of your Ladyſhip's Wedding-Clothes —— Infinitely pretty, as I hope to be ſav'd; a world of Variety, and not at all gaudy.

To Lear.] —— My dear Father-in-Law, embrace me.

Lear. Your Lordſhip does me too much Honour.

Aſide.] —— I ſhall be a great Man.

Eſop. Come, Gentlemen, are all things ready? Where's the Prieſt?

Prieſt. Here, my noble Lord.

Eſop. Moſt Reverend —— Will you pleaſe to ſay Grace, that

that I may fall to; for I'm very hungry, and here's very good Meat. But where's my Rival all this while? The leaſt we can do, is to invite him to the Wedding.

Lear. My Lord, he's in Priſon.

Eſop. In Priſon! how ſo?

Lear. He would have murder'd me.

Eſop. A bloody Fellow! But let's ſee him however. Send for him quickly.

Ha, Governor —— that handſome Daughter of yours, I will ſo mumble her ——

Lear. I ſhall be a great Man.

Enter Oronces *pinion'd and guarded.*

Eſop. O ho, here's my Rival! Then we have all we want. Advance, Sir, if you pleaſe. I deſire you'll do me the favour to be a Witneſs to my Marriage, leſt one of theſe days you ſhou'd take a fancy to diſpute my Wife with me.

Or. Do you then ſend for me to inſult me? 'Tis baſe in you.

Eſop. I have no time now to throw away upon Points of Generoſity; I have hotter Work upon my hands. Come, Prieſt, advance.

Lear. Pray hold him faſt there; he has the Devil and all of miſchief in's Eye.

Eſop. to *Euph.*] Will your Ladyſhip pleaſe, Mame, to give me your fair Hand — hey-day. [*She refuſes her Hand.*

Lear. I'll give it you, my noble Lord, if ſhe won't.

Aſide.] A ſtubborn, ſelf-will'd, ſtiff-necked Strumpet.

[Learchus *holds out her Hand to* Eſop, *who takes it*; Oronces *ſtands on* Eſop's *left Hand, and the Prieſt before 'em.*

Eſop. Let my Rival ſtand next me: Of all Men I'd have him be ſatisfy'd.

Or. Barbarous inhuman Monſter!

Eſop. Now, Prieſt, do thy Office.

Flouriſh with the Trumpets.

Prieſt. Since the eternal Laws of Fate decree,
That He, thy Husband; She, thy Wife ſhou'd be,
May Heaven take you to its Care,
May *Jupiter* look down,
Place on your Heads Contentment's Crown;
And may his Godhead never frown
Upon this happy Pair. [*Flouriſh again of Trumpets.*

[*As the Prieſt pronounces the laſt Line,* Eſop *joins* Oronces *and* Euphronia's *Hands.*

Or. O happy Change! Bleſſings on Bleſſings wait on the generous *Eſop.*

Eſop. Happy, thrice happy may you ever be,
And if you think there's ſomething due to me,
Pay it in mutual Love and Conſtancy.

Euph. to *Eſop.*] You'll pardon me, moſt generous Man, if in the preſent Tranſports of my Soul, which you your ſelf have by your Bounty caus'd, my willing Tongue is ty'd from uttering the Thoughts that flow from a moſt grateful Heart.

Eſop. For what I've done I merit little Thanks,
Since what I've done my Duty bound me to.
I wou'd your Father had acquitted his:
But he who's ſuch a Tyrant o'er his Children,
To ſacrifice their Peace to his Ambition,
Is fit to govern nothing but himſelf.

To Lear.] And therefore, Sir, at my Return to Court
I ſhall take care this City may be ſway'd
By more Humanity than dwells in you.

Lear. aſide.] I ſhall be a great Man.

Euph. to *Eſop.*] Had I not reaſon, from your conſtant Goodneſs,
To judge your Bounty, Sir, is infinite,
I ſhou'd not dare to ſue for farther Favours:
But pardon me, if imitating Heaven and you,
I eaſily forgive my aged Father,
And beg that *Eſop* wou'd forgive him too. [*Kneeling to him.*

Eſop. The Injury he wou'd have done to you was great indeed: But 'twas a Bleſſing he deſign'd for me. If therefore you can pardon him, I may.

To Lear. Your injur'd Daughter, Sir, has on her Knees intreated for her cruel barbarous Father; and by her Goodneſs has obtain'd her Suit. If in the Remnant of your Days you can find out ſome way to recompence her, do it, that Men and Gods may pardon you, as ſhe and I have done. But let me ſee, I have one Quarrel ſtill to make up. Where's my old Friend, *Doris?*

Dor. She's here, Sir, at your Service; and as much your Friend as ever: True to her Principles, and firm to her

her Mistress. But she has a much better Opinion of you now than she had half an hour ago.

Esop. She has reason: For my Soul appear'd then as deform'd as my Body. But I hope now one may so far mediate for t'other, that provided I don't make Love, the Women won't quarrel with me; for they are worse Enemies even than they are Friends.

Come, Gentlemen, I'll humour my Dress a little longer, and share with you in the Diversions these boon Companions have prepar'd us. Let's take our Places, and see how they can divert us.

Esop *leads the Bride to her Place. All being seated, there's a short Consort of Hautboys, Trumpets, &c. After which a Dance between an old Man and a young Woman, who shuns him still as he comes near her. At last he stops, and begins this Dialogue; which they sing together.*

Old Man.

Why so cold, and why so coy?
What I want in Youth and Fire,
I have in Love and in Desire:
To my Arms, my Love, my Joy;
Why so cold, and why so coy?

Woman.

'Tis Sympathy perhaps with you;
You are cold, and I'm so too.

Old Man.

My Years alone have froze my Blood;
Youthful Heat in Female Charms,
Glowing in my aged Arms,
Won'd melt it down once more into a Flood.

Woman.

Women, alas, like Flints, ne'er burn alone;
To make a Virgin know
There's Fire within the Stone,
Some manly Steel must boldly strike the Blow.

Old Man.

Assist me only with your Charms.
You'll find I'm Man, and still am bold;
You'll find I still can strike, tho old:
I only want your Aid to raise my Arm.

[*Enter a* Youth, *who ſeizes on the* Young Woman.]

Youth.

Who talks of Charms, who talks of Aid?
I bring an Arm
That wants no Charm,
To rouze the Fire that's in a flinty Maid.
Retire old Age,
—— Winter be gone:
Behold the youthful Spring comes gayly on.
Here, here's a Torch to light a Virgin's Fire:
To my Arms, my Love, my Joy;
When Women have what they deſire,
They're neither cold nor coy.

[She takes him in her Arms.

The Song and Dance ended, Eſop *takes* Euphronia *and* Oronces *by the Hands, leading them forwards.*

Eſop. By this time, my young eager Couple, 'tis probable you wou'd be glad to be alone; perhaps you'll have a mind to go to Bed even without your Supper; for Brides and Bridegrooms eat little on their Wedding-Night. But ſince if Matrimony were worn as it ought to be, it wou'd perhaps ſit eaſier about us than uſually it does, I'll give you one word of Counſel, and ſo I ſhall releaſe you.

When one is out of Humour, let the other be dumb.

Let your Diverſions be ſuch as both may have a ſhare in 'em.

Never let Familiarity exclude Reſpect.

Be clean in your Clothes, but nicely ſo in your Perſons.

Eat at one Table, lie in one Room, but ſleep in two Beds: I'll tell the Ladies why.

Turning to the Boxes.

In the ſprightly Month of May,
When Males and Females ſport and play,
And kiſs and toy away the Day;
An eager Sparrow and his Mate,
Chirping on a Tree were ſat,
Full of Love——and full of Prate.
They talkt of nothing but their Fires,
Of raging Heats, and ſtrong Deſires,
Of eternal Conſtancy,
How true and faithful they wou'd be;
Of this and that, and endleſs Joys,
And a thouſand more ſuch Toys:

The

The only thing they apprehended,
Was that their Lives wou'd be so short,
They cou'd not finish half their Sport
Before their Days were ended.
But as from Bough to Bough they rove,
They chanc'd at last
In furious haste,
On a Twig with Birdlime spread,
(Want of a more downy Bed)
To act a Scene of Love.
Fatal it prov'd to both their Fires:
For tho at length they broke away,
And baulk'd the School-Boy of his Prey,
Which made him weep the live-long Day;
The Bridegroom, in the hasty strife,
Was stuck so fast to his dear Wife,
That tho he us'd his utmost Art,
He quickly found it was in vain,
To put himself to farther Pain,
They never more must part.
A gloomy Shade o'ercast his Brow;
He found himself —— I know not how:
He look'd —— as Husbands often do.
Where-e'er he mov'd, he felt her still,
She kiss'd him oft against his Will:
Abroad, at Home, at Bed and Board,
With Favours she o'rwhelm'd her Lord.
Oft he turn'd his Head away,
And seldom had a word to say;
Which absolutely spoil'd her Play,
For she was better stor'd.
Howe'er at length her Stock was spent,
(For Female Fires sometimes may be
Subject to Mortality;)
So Back to Back they sit, and sullenly repent.
But the mute Scene was quickly ended,
The Lady, for her share, pretended
The want of Love lay at his door;
For her part she had still in store
Enough for him and twenty more,
Which cou'd not be contended.

He

He answer'd her in homely Words,
(For Sparrows are but ill-bred Birds)
That he already had enjoy'd
So much, that truly he was cloy'd.
Which so provok'd her Spleen,
That after some good hearty Prayers,
A Jostle, and some spightful Tears,
They fell together by the ears,
And ne'er were fond again.

ESOP.

PART II.

Enter Players.

Esop. WELL, good People, who are all you?

Omnes. Sir, we are Players?

Esop. Players! What Players?

Play. Why, Sir, we are Stage-Players, that's our Calling: Tho we play upon other things too; some of us play upon the Fiddle; some play upon the Flute; we play upon one another; we play upon the Town; and we play upon the Patentees.

Esop. Patentees! Prithee, what are they?

Play. Why, they are, Sir —— Sir, they are, ——! Cod I don't know what they are —— Fish or Flesh —— Masters or Servants —— Sometimes one —— Sometimes t'other, I think —— Just as we are in the Mood.

Esop. Why, I thought they had a lawful Authority over you.

Play. Lawful Authority, Sir —— Sir, we are free-born *Englishmen*, we care not for Law nor Authority neither, when we are out of humour.

Esop.

Eſop. But I think they pretended at leaſt to an Authority over you; pray upon what Foundation was it built?

Play. Upon a rotten one —— if you'll believe us. Sir, I'll tell you what the Projectors did: They imbark'd twenty thouſand Pound upon a leaky Veſſel —— She was built at *Whitehall*; I think they call'd her — the Patent — ay, the Patent: Her Keel was made of a Broad Seal —— and the King gave 'em a white Staff for their Main-Maſt. She was a pretty tight Frigot to look upon, indeed: They ſpar'd nothing to ſet her off; they gilded her, and painted her, and rigg'd, and gunn'd her; and ſo ſent her a privateering. But the firſt Storm that blew, down went the Maſt, aſhoar went the Ship — Crack ſays the Keel, Mercy cry'd the Pilot; but the Wind was ſo high, his Pray'rs cou'd not be heard —— ſo they ſplit upon a Rock —— that lay hid under a Petticoat.

Eſop. A very ſad Story this: But what became of the Ship's Company?

Play. Why, Sir, your humble Servants here, who were the Officers, and the beſt of the Sailors —— (little *Ben* amongſt the reſt) ſeiz'd on a ſmall Bark that lay to our Hand, and away we put to Sea again. To ſay the truth, we were better mann'd than rigg'd, and Ammunition was plaguy ſcarce amongſt us —— However, a cruiſing we went, and ſome pretty ſmall Prizes we have made; but the Bleſſing of Heaven not being among us —— Or how the Devil 'tis, I can't tell; but we are not rich.

Eſop. Well, but what became of the reſt of the Crew?

Play. Why, Sir, as for the Scoundrels, they, poor Dogs, ſtuck by the Wrack. The Captain gave them Bread and Cheeſe, and good Words —— He told them, if they wou'd patch her up, and venture t'other Cruiſe, he'd prefer 'em all; ſo to work they went, and to Sea they got her.

Eſop. I hope he kept his word with 'em.

Play. That he did; he made the Boatſwain's Mate Lieutenant; he made the Cook Doctor: he was forc'd to be Purſer, and Pilot, and Gunner himſelf; and the Swabber took Orders to be Chaplain.

Eſop. But with ſuch unskilful Officers, I'am afraid, they'll hardly keep above Water long.

Play. Why truly, Sir, we care not how ſoon they are under:

under: But curst Folks thrive, I think. I know nothing else that makes 'em swim. I'm sure, by the Rules of Navigation, they ought to have over-set long since; for they carry a great deal of Sail, and have very little Ballast.

Esop. I'm afraid you ruin one another. I fancy if you were all in a Ship together again, you'd have less Work, and more Profit.

Play. Ah, Sir —— we are resolv'd we'll never sail under Captain Patentee again.

Esop. Prithee, why so?

Play. Sir, he has us'd us like Dogs.

Wom. —— And Bitches too, Sir.

Esop. I'm sorry to hear that; pray how was't he treated you?

Play. Sir, 'tis impossible to tell; he us'd us like the *English* at *Amboyna* ——

Esop. But I wou'd know some Particulars; tell me what 'twas he did to you.

Play. What he did, Sir, —— why he did in the first place, Sir —— In the first place, Sir, he did —— I Cod I don't know what he did —— Can you tell Wife?

Wom. Yes, marry can I; and a burning Shame it was too.

Play. O, I remember now, Sir, he wou'd not give us Plumbs enough in our Pudding,

Esop. That indeed was very hard; but did he give you as many as he promis'd you?

Play. Yes, and more; but what of all that, we had not as many as we had a mind to ——

1 *Wom.* Sir, my Husband tells you Truth ——

Esop. I believe he may; but what other wrongs did he do you?

1 *Wom.* Why, Sir, he did not treat me with Respect; 'twas not one Day in three he wou'd so much as bid me good-morrow ——

2 *Wom.* Sir, he invited me to Dinner, and never drank my Health.

1 *Wom.* Then he cock'd his Hat at Mrs. *Port.*

2. *Wom.* Yes, and told Mrs. *Slippery* he had as good a Face as she had.

Esop. Why these were insufferable Abuses ——

2 *Play.*

2 *Play.* Then, Sir, I did but come to him one day —— and tell him I wanted fifty Pound; and what do you think he did by me, Sir —— Sir, he turn'd round upon his Heel like a Top ——

1 *Play.* But that was nothing to the Affront he put upon me, Sir. I came to him, and in very civil words, as I thought, desir'd him to double my Pay: Sir, would you believe it? He had the Barbarity to ask me if I intended to double my Work; and because I told him no, Sir —— he did use me, good Lord, how he did use me!

Esop. Prithee, how?

1 *Pl.* Why he walk'd off, and answer'd me never a word.

Esop. How had you Patience?

1 *Play.* Sir, I had not Patience. I sent him a Challenge; and what do you think his Answer was —— He sent me word I was a scoundrel Son of a Whore, and he wou'd only fight me by Proxy ——

Esop. Very fine!

1 *Play.* At this rate, Sir, were we poor Dogs us'd —— till one frosty Morning down he comes amongst us —— and very roundly tells us —— That for the future, no Purchase no Pay. They that wou'd not work should not eat —— Sir, we at first ask'd him coolly and civilly —— why? His Answer was, Because the Town wanted Diversion, and he wanted Money —— Our Reply to this, Sir, was very short; but I think to the purpose.

Esop. What was it?

1 *Play.* It was, Sir, that so we wallow'd in Plenty and Ease —— the Town and he might be damn'd —— This, Sir, is the true History of Separation —— and we hope you'll stand our Friend ——

Esop. I'll tell you what, Sirs ——

I once a Pack of Beagles knew ——
That much resembled I know who;
With a good Huntsman at their Tail,
In full Command,
With Whip in Hand,
They'd run apace
The chearful Chace,
And of their Game were seldom known to fail.

But being at length their chance to find
A Huntſman of a gentler kind,
They ſoon perceiv'd the Rein was ſlack,
The Word went quickly through the Pack ——
They one and all cry'd Liberty;
This happy moment we are free,
We'll range the Woods,
Like Nymphs and Gods,
And ſpend our Mouths in praiſe of Mutiny.
With that old Jowler *trots away,*
And Bowman *ſingles out his Prey;*
Thunder bellow'd through the Wood,
And ſwore he'd burſt his Guts with Blood.
Venus tript it o'er the Plain,
With boundleſs hopes of boundleſs Gain.
—— Juno, *ſhe ſlipt down the Hedge,*
But left her ſacred Word for Pledge;
That all ſhe pick'd up by the by ——
Shou'd to the publick Treaſury.
And well they might rely upon her;
For Juno *was a Bitch of Honour.*
In ſhort, they all had hopes to ſee
A heavenly Crop of Mutiny,
And ſo to reaping fell.
But in a little time they found,
It was the Devil had till'd the Ground,
And brought the Seed from Hell.
The Pack divided, nothing throve:
Diſcord ſeiz'd the Throne of Love.
Want and Miſery all endure,
All take pains, and all grow poor.
When they had toil'd the live-long Day,
And came at night to view their Prey,
Oft, alas! ſo ill they'd ſped,
That half went ſupperleſs to Bed.
At length they all in Council ſat,
Where at a very fair Debate,
It was agreed at laſt,
That Slavery with Eaſe and Plenty,
When Hounds were ſomething turn'd of twenty,
Was much a better Fate,
Than 'twas to work and faſt.

1 *Play.* Well, Sir —— and what did they do then?

Eſop. Why they all went home to their Kennel again. If you think they did wiſely, you'll do well to follow their Example. [*Exit* Eſop.

1 *Play.* Well, Beagles, what think you of the little Gentleman's Advice?

2 *Wom.* I think he's a little ugly Philoſopher, and talks like a Fool.

1 *Play.* Ay, why there's it now! If he had been a tall handſome Blockhead, he had talk'd like a wiſe Man.

2 *Wom.* Why, do you think, Mr. *Fowler*, that we'll ever join again?

1 *Play.* I do think, ſweet Mrs. *Juno*, that if we do not join again, you muſt be a little freer of your Carcaſe than you are, or you muſt bring down your Pride to a Serge Petticoat.

1 *Wom.* And do you think, Sir, after the Affronts I have receiv'd, the Patent and I can ever be Friends?

1 *Play.* I do think, Madam, that if my Intereſt had not been more affronted than your Face, the Patent and you had never been Foes.

1 *Wom.* And ſo, Sir, then you have ſerious thoughts of a Reconciliation?

1 *Play.* Madam, I do believe I may.

1 *Wom.* Why then, Sir, give me leave to tell you, that —— make it my Intereſt, and I'll have ſerious thoughts on't too.

2 *Wom.* Nay, if you are thereabouts, I deſire to come into the Treaty.

3 *Play.* And I. 4 *Play.* And I.

2 *Play.* And I. No ſeparate Peace. None of your *Turin* Play, I beſeech you.

1 *Play.* Why then, ſince you are ſo chriſtianly diſpos'd —— I think we had beſt adjourn immediately to our Council-Chamber, chuſe ſome potent Prince for Mediator and Guarantee —— Fix upon the place of Treaty, diſpatch our Plenipo's, and whip up the Peace like an Oyſter. For under the Roſe, my Confederates, here is ſuch a damn'd Diſcount upon our Bills, I'm afraid, if we ſtand it out another Campaign, we muſt live upon ſlender Subſiſtence.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter

Enter a Country Gentleman, who walks to and fro, looking angrily upon Eſop.

Eſop. Have you any buſineſs with me, Sir?

Gent. —— I can't tell whether I have or not.

Eſop. You ſeem diſturb'd, Sir.

Gent. I'm always ſo at the ſight of a Courtier.

Eſop. Pray what may it be, that gives you ſo great an Antipathy to 'em?

Gent. My Profeſſion.

Eſop. What's that?

Gent. Honeſty.

Eſop. 'Tis an honeſt Profeſſion. I hope, Sir, for the general Good of Mankind, you are in ſome publick Employment.

Gent. So I am, Sir, —— no Thanks to the Court.

Eſop. You are then, I ſuppoſe, imploy'd by —

Gent. My Country.

Eſop. Who have made you —

Gent. A Senator.

Eſop. Sir, I reverence you. [*Bowing.*

Gent. Sir, you may reverence as low as you pleaſe; but I ſhall ſpare none of you. Sir, I am intruſted by my Country with above ten thouſand of their Grievances, and in order to redreſs them, my Deſign is to hang ten thouſand Courtiers.

Eſop. Why, 'tis making ſhort Work, I muſt confeſs; but are you ſure, Sir, that wou'd do't?

Gent. Sure, ——— Ay, ſure.

Eſop. How do you know?

Gent. Why, the whole Country ſays ſo, and I at the Head of 'em. Now let me ſee who dares ſay the contrary.

Eſop. Not I, truly. But, Sir, if you won't take it ill, I'll ask you a Queſtion or two.

Gent. Sir, I ſhall take ill what I pleaſe. And if you, or e'er a Courtier of you all pretend the contrary, I ſay, it's a Breach of Privilege ——— Now put your Queſtion, if you think fit.

Eſop. Why then, Sir, with all due regard to your Character, and your Privilege too, I wou'd be glad to know what you chiefly complain of.

Gent. Why, Sir, I do chiefly complain, that we have,

A great many Ships, and a very little Trade;
A great many Tenants, and very little Money;
A great many Soldiers, and very little fighting;
A great many *Gazettes*, and little good News;
A great many Stateſmen, and very little Wiſdom;
A great many Parſons, and not an Ounce of Religion.

Eſop. Why truly, Sir, I do confeſs theſe are Grievances very well worth your redreſſing. I perceive you are truly ſenſible of our Diſeaſes; but I'm afraid you are a little out in the Cure.

Gent. Sir, I perceive you take me for a Country-Phyſician: But you ſhall find, Sir, that a Country-Doctor is able to deal with a Court-Quack; and to ſhew you that I do underſtand ſomething of the State of the Body Politick, I will tell you, Sir, that I have heard a wiſe Man ſay, The Court is the Stomach of the Nation, in which, if the Buſineſs be not thorowly digeſted, the whole Carcaſe will be in diſorder. Now, Sir, I do find by the Feebleneſs of the Members, and the Vapours that fly into the Head, that this ſame Stomach is full of Indigeſtions, which muſt be remov'd: And therefore, Sir, I am come poſt to Town with my Head full of *Crocus Mem.* and deſign to give the Court a Vomit.

Eſop. Sir, the Phyſick you mention, tho neceſſary ſometimes, is of too violent a Nature to be us'd without a great deal of Caution. I'm afraid you are a little too raſh in your Preſcriptions. Is it not poſſible you may be miſtaken in the Cauſe of the Diſtemper?

Gent. Sir, I do not think it poſſible I ſhould be miſtaken in any thing.

Eſop. Have you been long a Senator?

Gent. No, Sir.

Eſop. Have you been much about Town?

Gent. No, Sir.

Eſop. Have you convers'd much with Men of Buſineſs?

Gent. No, Sir.

Eſop. Have you made any ſerious Enquiry into the preſent Diſorders of the Nation?

Gent. No, Sir.

Eſop. Have you ever heard what the Men now imploy'd in Buſineſs have to ſay for themſelves?

Gent. No, Sir.

Eſop. How then do you know they deſerve to be puniſh'd for the preſent Diſorders in your Affairs?

Gent. I'll tell you how I know.

Eſop. I would be glad to hear.

Gent. Why, I know by this —— I know it, I ſay, by this —— that I'm ſure on't —— And to give you Demonſtration that I'm ſure on't, there is not one Man in a good Poſt in the Nation ——— but I'd give my Vote to hang him: Now I hope you are convinc'd.

Eſop. As for Example: The firſt Miniſter of State, why wou'd you hang him?

Gent. Becauſe he gives bad Counſel.

Eſop. How do you know?

Gent. Why they ſay ſo.

Eſop. And who would you put in his room?

Gent. One that would give better.

Eſop. Who's that?

Gent. My ſelf.

Eſop. The Secretary of State, why wou'd you hang him?

Gent. Becauſe he has not good Intelligence.

Eſop. How do you know?

Gent. I have heard ſo.

Eſop. And who would you put in his Place?

Gent. My Father.

Eſop. The Treaſurer, why would you hang him?

Gent. Becauſe he does not underſtand his Buſineſs.

Eſop. How do you know?

Gent. I dreamt ſo.

Eſop. And who would you have ſucceed him?

Gent. My Uncle.

Eſop. The Admiral, why would you hang him?

Gent. Becauſe he has not deſtroy'd the Enemies.

Eſop. How do you know he could do it?

Gent. Why, I believe ſo.

Eſop. And who would you have command in his ſtead?

Gent. My Brother.

Eſop. And the General, why would you hang him?

Gent. Becauſe he took ne'er a Town laſt Campaign.

Eſop. And how do you know 'twas in his power?

Gent. Why, I don't care a Souſe whether it was in his power

power or not. But I have a Son at home, a brave chapping Lad; he has been Captain in the Militia these twelve Months, and I'd be glad to see him in his Place. What do ye stare for, Sir? ha! I gad I tell you he'd scour all to the Devil. He's none of your Fencers, none of your sa-sa Men. *Numphs* is downright, that's his Play. You may see his Courage in his Face: He has a Pair of Cheeks like two Bladders, a Nose as flat as your Hand, and a Forehead like a Bull.

Esop. In short, Sir, I find if you and your Family were provided for, things would soon grow better than they do.

Gent. And so they wou'd, Sir. Clap me at the Head of the State, and *Numphs* at the Head of the Army: He with his Club-Musquet, and I with my Club-Head-piece, we'd soon put an end to your Business.

Esop. I believe you wou'd indeed. And therefore since I happen to be acquainted with your extraordinary Abilities, I am resolv'd to give the King an Account of you, and employ my Interest with him, that you and your Son may have the Posts you desire.

Gent. Will you, by the Lord? —— Give me your Fist, Sir —— the only honest Courtier that ever I met with in my Life.

Esop. But, Sir, when I have done you this mighty Piece of Service, I shall have a small Request to beg of you, which I hope you won't refuse me.

Gent. What's that?

Esop. Why 'tis in behalf of the two Officers who are to be displac'd to make room for you and your Son.

Gent. The Secretary and the General?

Esop. The same. 'Tis pity they should be quite out of business; I must therefore desire you'll let me recommend one of 'em to you for your Bailiff, and t'other for your Huntsman.

Gent. My Bailiff and my Huntsman! —— Sir, that's not to be granted.

Esop. Pray why?

Gent. Why! —— Because one wou'd ruin my Land, and t'other wou'd spoil my Fox-Hounds.

Esop. Why do you think so?

Gent. Why do I think so! —— These Courtiers

will ask the ſtrangeſt Queſtions ——— Why, Sir, do you think that Men bred up to the State or the Army, can underſtand the Buſineſs of Ploughing and Hunting?

Eſop. I did not know but they might.

Gent. How cou'd you think ſo?

Eſop. Becauſe I ſee Men bred up to Ploughing and Hunting, underſtand the Buſineſs of the State and the Army.

Gent. I'm ſhot ——— I ha'n't one Word to ſay for my ſelf ——— I never was ſo caught in my Life.

Eſop. I perceive, Sir, by your Looks what I have ſaid has made ſome Impreſſion upon you; and would perhaps do more if you wou'd give it leave. [*Taking his Hand.*] Come, Sir, tho I am a Stranger to you, I can be your Friend; my Favour at Court does not hinder me from being a Lover of my Country. 'Tis my Nature, as well as Principle, to be pleas'd with the Proſperity of Mankind. I wiſh all things happy, and my Study is to make them ſo.

The Diſtempers of the Government (which I own are great) have employ'd the ſtretch of my Underſtanding, and the deepeſt of my Thoughts to penetrate the Cauſe, and to find out the Remedy. But alas! all the Product of my Study is this; That I find there is too near a Reſemblance between the Diſeaſes of the State and thoſe of the Body, for the moſt expert Miniſter to become a greater Maſter in one than the College is in t'other; and how far their Skill extends, you may ſee by this Lump upon my Back. Allowances in all Profeſſions there muſt be, ſince 'tis weak Man that is the weak Profeſſor. Believe me, Senator, for I have ſeen the Proof on't; The longeſt Beard amongſt us is a Fool. Cou'd you but ſtand behind the Curtain, and there obſerve the ſecret Springs of State, you'd ſee in all the Good or Evil that attends it, ten Ounces of Chance for one Grain either of Wiſdom or Roguery.

You'd ſee, perhaps, a venerable Stateſman ſit faſt aſleep in a great downy Chair; whilſt in that ſoft Vacuion of his Thought, blind Chance (or what at leaſt we blindly call ſo) ſhall ſo diſpoſe a thouſand ſecret Wheels, that when he awakes, he needs but write his Name to publiſh to the World ſome bleſt Event, for which his Statue ſhall be rais'd in Braſs.

Perhaps a Moment thence, you ſhall behold him torturing his Brain; his Thoughts all ſtretch'd upon the Wrack for

for publick Service; the live-long Night, when all the World's at rest, consum'd in Care, and watching for their Safety, when by a Whirlwind in his Fate, in spight of him, some mischief shall befal 'em, for which a furious Sentence strait shall pass, and they shall vote him to the Scaffold. Even thus uncertain are Rewards and Punishments; and even thus little do the People know when 'tis the Statesman merits one or t'other.

Gent. Now I do believe I am beginning to be a wise Man; for I never till now perceiv'd I was a Fool. But do you then really believe, Sir, our Men in Business do the best they can?

Esop. Many of 'em do: Some perhaps do not. But this you may depend upon; He that is out of Business is the worst Judge in the World of him that is in: First, because he seldom knows any thing of the matter: And, Secondly, because he always desires to get his Place.

Gent. And so, Sir, you have turn'd the Tables upon the Plaintiff, and lay the Fool and Knave at his door.

Esop. If I do him wrong, I'm sorry for't. Let him examine himself, he'll find whether I do or not. [*Ex.* Esop.

Gent. ——— Examine! ——— I think I have had enough of that already. There's nothing left, that I know of, but to give Sentence: And truly I think there's no great difficulty in that. A very pretty Fellow I am indeed! Here am I come bellowing and roaring 200 Miles post to find my self an Ass; when with one quarter of an Hour's Consideration I might have made the self-same Discovery, without going over my Threshold. Well, if ever they send me on their Errand to reform the State again, I'll be damn'd. But this I'll do: I'll go home and reform my Family, if I can: Them I'm sure I know. There's my Father's a peevish old Coxcomb: There's my Uncle's a drunken old Sot: There's my Brother's a cowardly Bully: Sam *Numps* is a lubberly Whelp: I've a great romping Daughter, that stares like a Heifer; and a Wife that's a flatternly Sow. [*Exit.*

Enter a Young, Gay, Airy Beau; *who stands smiling contemptibly upon* Esop.

Esop. Well, Sir, what are you?

Beau. A Fool.

Esop.

Esop. That's impossible; ——— for if thou wer't, thou'dst think thy self a wise Man.

Beau. So I do ——— This is my own Opinion ——— the t'other's my Neighbours. [*Walking airily about.*

Esop *gazing after him.*] Have you any Business with me, Sir?

Beau. Sir, I have Business with no body ——— Pleasure's my Study.

Esop aside.] An odd Fellow this! ——— Pray, Sir, who are you?

Beau. I can't tell ———

Esop. ——— Do you know who I am?

Beau. No, Sir: I'm a Favourite at Court, and I neither know my self, nor any body else.

Esop. Are you in any Employment?

Beau. Yes ———

Esop. What is't?

Beau. I don't know the Name on't.

Esop. You know the Business on't, I hope?

Beau. That I do ——— the Business of it is ——— to ——— put in a Depury, and receive the Money.

Esop. ——— Pray what may be your Name?

Beau. Empty.

Esop. Where do you live?

Beau. In the Side-Box.

Esop. What do you do there?

Beau. I ogle the Ladies.

Esop. To what purpose?

Beau. To no purpose.

Esop. Why then do you do it?

Beau. Because they like it, and I like it.

Esop. Wherein consists the Pleasure?

Beau. In playing the Fool.

Esop. ——— Pray, Sir, what Age are you?

Beau. Five and twenty my Body; my Head's about fifteen.

Esop. Is your Father living?

Beau. Dead, thank God.

Esop. Has he been long so?

Beau. Positively, yes.

Esop. Where were you brought up?

Beau.

Beau. At School.

Eſop. What School?

Beau. The School of *Venus.*

Eſop. Were you ever at the Univerſity?

Beau. Yes.

Eſop. What Study did you follow there?

Beau. My Bed-Maker.

Eſop. How long did you ſtay?

Beau. Till I had loſt my Maidenhead.

Eſop. Why did you come away?

Beau. Becauſe I was expell'd.

Eſop. Where did you go then?

Beau. To Court.

Eſop. Who took care of your Education there?

Beau. A Whore and a Dancing-Maſter.

Eſop. What did you gain by them?

Beau. A *Minuet*, and the *Pox.*

Eſop. Have you an Eſtate?

Beau. I had.

Eſop. What's become on't?

Beau. Spent.

Eſop. In what?

Beau. In a Twelvemonth.

Eſop. But how?

Beau. Why in Dreſſing, Drinking, Whoring, Claps, Dice, and Scriveners. What do you think of me now, old Gentleman?

Eſop. Pray what do you think of your ſelf?

Beau. I don't think at all: I know how to beſtow my time better.

Eſop. Are you married?

Beau. No —— have you ever a Daughter to beſtow upon me?

Eſop. She wou'd be well beſtow'd.

Beau. Why, I'm a ſtrong young Dog, you old Put you: ſhe may be worſe coupled ——

Eſop. Have you then a mind to a Wife, Sir?

Beau. *Yaw, min Heer.*

Eſop. What wou'd you do with her?

Beau. Why, I'd take care of her Affairs, rid her of all her Troubles, her Maidenhead, and her Portion.

Eſop.

Eſop. And pray what ſort of Wife wou'd you be willing to throw your ſelf away upon?

Beau. Why, upon one that has Youth, Beauty, Quality, Vertue, Wit, and Money.

Eſop. And how may you be qualified your ſelf, to back you in your Pretenſions to ſuch a one?

Beau. Why, I am qualified with —— a Perriwig —— a Snuff-Box —— a Feather —— a —— ſmooth Face —— a Fool's Head —— and a Patch.

Eſop. But one Queſtion more: What Settlements can you make?

Beau. Settlements! —— Why, if ſhe be a very great Heireſs indeed, I believe I may ſettle —— my ſelf upon her for Life, and my Pox upon her Children for ever.

Eſop. 'Tis enough; you may expect I'll ſerve you, if it lies in my way. But I wou'd not have you rely too much upon your Succeſs, becauſe People ſometimes are miſtaken ——

As for Example ——

An Ape there was of nimble Parts,
A great Intruder into Hearts,
As brisk, and gay, and full of Air,
As you, or I, or any here;
Rich in his Dreſs, of ſplendid Shew,
And with an Head like any Beau:
Eternal Mirth was in his Face;
Where'er he went,
He was content,
So Fortune had but kindly ſent
Some Ladies —— and a Looking-Glaſs.
Encouragement they always gave him,
Encouragement to play the Fool;
For ſoon they found it was a Tool,
Wou'd hardly be ſo much in Love,
But that the mumbling of a Glove,
Or tearing of a Fan, wou'd ſave him.

Theſe Bounties he accepts as Proof
Of Feats done by his Wit and Youth;
He gives their Freedom gone for ever,
Concludes each Female Heart undone,
Except that very Happy One,
To which he'd pleaſe to do the Favour.

In ſhort, ſo ſmooth his Matters went,
He gueſs'd, where'er his Thoughts were bent,
The Lady he muſt carry.
So put on a fine new Cravat,
He comb'd his Wig, he cock'd his Hat,
And gave it out, he'd marry.
But here, alas! he found to's Coſt,
He had reckon'd long without his Hoſte;
For whereſoe'er he made the Attack,
Poor Pug with ſhame was beaten back.
The firſt Fair She he had in Chace,
Was a young Cat, extremely rich,
Her Mother was a noted Witch;
So had the Daughter prov'd but civil,
He had been related to the Devil.
But when he came
To urge his Flame,
She ſcratch'd him o'er the Face.
With that he went among the Bitches,
Such as had Beauty, Wit, and Riches,
And ſuave Miſs Maulken, to her Coſt,
Shew'd quickly ſee what ſhe had loſt:
But the poor unlucky Swain
Miſs'd his Shepherdeſs again;
His Fate was to miſcarry;
It was his deſtiny to find,
That Cats and Dogs are of a mind,
When Monkeys come to marry.

Beau. 'Tis very well; ——— 'Tis very well, old Spark; I ſay, 'tis very well. Becauſe I han't a Pair of plod Shoes, and a dirty Shirt, you think a Woman won't venture upon me for a Husband ——— Why now to ſhew you, old Father, how little you Philoſophers know of the Ladies ——— I'll tell you an Adventure of a Friend of mine.

A Band, a Bob-Wig, and a Feather,
Attack'd a Lady's Heart together:
The Band in a moſt learned Plea,
Made up of deep Philoſophy,
Told her, if ſhe wou'd pleaſe to wed
A Reverend Beard, and take inſtead

Of

Of vigorous Youth,
Old solemn Truth,
With Books and Morals into Bed,
How happy she would be.

The Bob, he told her, Management,
What wondrous Blessings Heaven sent
On Care, and Order, and Industry;
And truly he must be so free,
To own he thought your airy Beaux,
With powder'd Wigs and dancing Shoes,
Were good for nothing (would his Soul)
But prate, and talk, and play the Fool.

He said 'twas Wealth gave Joy and Mirth;
And that to be the thrifty Wife,
Of one who laboured all his Life,
To make a Mine of Gold his own,
And not spend Sixpence when he'd done,
Was Heaven upon Earth.

When these two Blabs had done, d'ye see,
The Feather (as it might be me)
Steps out, Sir, from behind the Curtain,
With such an Air, and such a Mien,
Look you, old Gentleman, in short,
He quickly spoil'd the Statesman's sport.

It prov'd such fine Weather,
That you must know, at the first Bout,
The Lady leapt about his Neck,
And off they went together.

Mo. Tale Esop.] There's a Tale for your Tale, old Dad, and so [illegible] Spectator.

FINIS.